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the myth of soulless women
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FIRST THINGS

APRIL 1997 • Number 72

CORRESPONDENCE 2 More on judicial usurpation; demographics and economics; evangelical catholicity; Catholic vs. catholic; Islam and democracy; the uses of rock music; population control in China; Teutonic racism

THIS TIME 11 *James Nuechterlein* My Own Private Rushmore

OPINION 13 *Michael Nolan* The Myth of Soulless Women
Michael P. Foley Tobacco and the Soul

ARTICLES

17 *Gilbert Meilaender* Creatures of Place and Time: Reflections on Moving

24 *Max L. Stackhouse* Humanism After Tillich

29 *Thomas D. Williams* Values, Virtues, and John Paul II

REPORT 33 *David Orgon Coolidge* Same-Sex Marriage: As Hawaii Goes . . .

BOOKS 38

Peter Berkowitz The Politics of Faith and the Politics of Scepticism by Michael Oakeshott
J. Budziszewski Why America Needs Religion by Guenter Lewy
George McKenna Love and Saint Augustine by Hannah Arendt
Keith J. Pavlischek When Sacred and Secular Mix by Stephen V. Monsma
R. V. Young Cleanth Brooks and the Rise of Modern Criticism by Mark Royden Winchell; . . . *and* Briefly Noted

THE PUBLIC SQUARE 56 A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life
Richard John Neuhaus
This Month: God and Bigotry at Yale, *etc.*
Poetry by *Daniel Gallio* (16), *David Craig* (28), *Craig Payne* (54)

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The End of Democracy? (Cont.)

The editors of First Things have performed a great service in publishing the two symposia (November 1996 and January 1997) on the judicial usurpation of politics, even though their action has been misconstrued by some. If they are in any way to blame for the misunderstanding, it is perhaps in not having sufficiently distinguished the dual focus of the original symposium. On the one hand it was to investigate the judicial usurpation of matters normally decided by political debate. On the other it was to examine the judicial enactment of laws that are contrary to the natural law and hence, as Pope John Paul II stated so unequivocally in *Evangelium Vitae*, null and void.

If these two issues are not kept separate, any challenge to the American judiciary can easily appear to question the legitimacy of the American government itself. But to dispute the validity of certain laws is quite different from rejecting the authority of the body that passed them. Neither is rejecting the judiciary's claim to be the whole of government equivalent to denying its right to be a part of the whole. What several of the symposiasts rightly point out is that the judicial part of the United States' government is overextended both politically and morally, and therefore that resistance in some form, possibly including civil disobedience, is called for.

There will of course be those for whom such a thought is by definition excessive. At that point we will know that we have already crossed a certain threshold after which the conservatives of the earthly city and those of the heavenly city must go their separate ways.

Graeme Hunter
Department of Philosophy
University of Ottawa
Canada

Your recent reflections on the legitimacy of the American "regime" are of grave concern. Surely no one can survey without chagrin and even outrage a government that countenances infanticide and that denies majoritarian rule by twisting the Constitution into a shape unrecognizable to the Founders.

Yet outrage is no substitute for an effective political strategy. As Carl Henry has noted, no one in our country is forced to have an abortion. No one is precluded from worshiping in the church or temple of his choice. No one is prevented from exercising his right to vote and thereby helping to alter disturbing policies and remove their authors from office. The coercion and repression associated with totalitarian states is nowhere present, as disturbing as some judicial rulings, executive actions, and congressional legislation may be.

In other words, the game is not yet up. I attended the news conference in Senator Lott's office the day the Senate failed to override the President's veto of the ban on partial-birth abortions. While that day must be regarded as one of the most tragic in our nation's history, I was heartened by the presence not only of the luminaries of the pro-family movement, but by the attendance of Senators Santorum, Coats, Nickles, and others. I was most moved by Senator Lott when he looked into the battery of cameras arrayed across the room, described partial-birth abortion as "murder," and called on the Senate to end this barbaric practice. This display of political courage, coming from the leader of the United States Senate, could not have happened in a regime whose fundamental legitimacy is lost. . . .

In the darkest days of the Second World War, during which he fought a genuinely illegitimate regime, Dietrich Bonhoeffer could easily have despaired. Instead, in a letter to a friend written in 1944, Bonhoeffer said, "The only fight that is lost is that which we give up." The Most High rules in the affairs of men, and may well allow circumstances which delegitimize political authority in the United States. Until that time, however, we should never consider our fight lost, nor grow weary in doing the good Scripture demands

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and our fraying culture so urgently needs.

Robert Schwarzwalder
Springfield, VA

. . . To overturn the usurpation of power by our presiding cultural commissars, Judge Robert Bork proposes to let Congress override U.S. Supreme Court decisions.

The crippling shortcoming in Bork's strategy is that Congress itself is part of the problem. Fundamental reform is so uncharacteristic of Congress that even in the so-called revolution of '94, Congress could not muster the collective will to bring the issue of school prayer to a floor vote. The same supposedly "radical" Congress failed to get the requisite two-thirds for minimal constitutional reforms that Republicans had pledged—such as the watered-down version of term limits (twelve years for both the House and the Senate) or the balanced budget amendment. Never in history has Congress impeached a Supreme Court Justice. Nor has the post-World War II Congress exercised its authority under Article III, section 2 of the Constitution by removing federal court jurisdiction over even one of the cases that occasioned usurpation.

Indeed it was because Congress sat quiescent in 1954, loath to legislate against racial segregation, that a powerful and popular precedent for judicial intervention was established. If Congress had fulfilled its obligations to black citizens, rather than defaulting to the Court to intervene in *Brown v. Board of Education,* the trend toward usurpation since the early 1960s would have been much more difficult to foist upon the nation.

Usurpation by the Court, i.e., stealing political power, with tacit approval insofar as Congress remains passive, together with the loathsome policies that the new regime is imposing on the country, are engendering talk of rebellion and revolt. Taking up arms against an arrogant judicial regime might recall the Spirit of 1776; it might serve to release frustrations and show that, if not the land of the free, America is still the home of the brave; but in the end, I think, the federal government would crush such an uprising. On the other hand, the faint-hearted course would be to surrender our liberties without a fight, and to pray that God will give us masters like Augustus or Constantine instead of Caligula or Nero.

Surely the nobler, wiser, and more promising approach is to solicit Divine assistance in restoring the kind of nation that God has seen fit to bless in not-so-distant U.S. history. In other words, the prerequisite to preventing the permanent demise of democracy is to succeed where the originators of democracy, the ancient Greeks, failed—by moving quickly and concretely to clean up our collective morals. Rolling back the judicial usurpation will be a key ingredient of reform, but a lesser one compared to an ethical upgrade in accordance with what the Declaration of Independence calls "a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence." . . .

Robert Struble, Jr.
Bremerton, WA

Two years ago the public will and the democratic process were thwarted by the cabal of the ACLU and the Hispanic left when California's Proposition 187 was nullified by court order. Hundreds of thousands of illegals have continued to enter California and continue to reap the same government benefits as tax-paying citizens.

Now history repeats itself. The same lobbies again thwart the will of the people and the democratic process in halting implementation of Proposition 209 (the abolition of quotas and racial preferences) overwhelmingly endorsed by California voters. And again, this is done by judicial dictat. To add to the injury, the Clinton Administration, with crass political pandering, has committed the Justice Department to join in the legal challenge. In other words, the citizens' government is being used against its very citizens.

These examples are even more vivid in their tyrannical ramifications than those, equally important, cited in First Things' original essays. Moreover, they point to the failure of the system itself to respond to and to protect the rights and wishes of the majority. What checks and balances? Here we have the executive branch supporting the usurpation of freedom by the judiciary. A couple of the letters in the January issue fail to see the similarities with 1776. From the

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point of view of Californians what is going on is far worse than taxation without representation. This is injustice *despite* representation, tyranny *disguised* as the rule of law. It isn't the open debate provoked by FIRST THINGS' November issue that is fostering the alienation of the American public from their government, but the dictatorial, undemocratic acts of the government itself.

Ronald F. Maxwell
Los Angeles, CA

I have appreciated the articles on the judiciary. The decision in *Roe v. Wade* has resulted in the enactment of a rather bizarre law in Nebraska, which precipitated my resignation from the bench. This law, which defines abortion as termination of human life, nonetheless *requires* judges to authorize abortions in certain cases.

In 1991, the state legislature, in an attempt to put some reasonable controls on teenage abortions, passed a law known as the Parental Notification Abortion Law. Under that law, any teenager wishing to abort her unborn child and not wanting to notify a parent may file a petition in court. The judge holds an ex parte hearing to determine whether the teenager is mature and can give an informed consent. Since the only evidence offered is in behalf of the teenager, the court regularly finds the teenager mature and able to give the informed consent.

The judge then by law must ("shall") authorize a physician to perform the abortion, which the law defines as "an act, procedure, device, or prescription administered to a woman known by the person so administering to be pregnant and administered with the intent and result of producing the premature expulsion, removal, *or termination of the human life within the womb of the pregnant woman . . .*" (emphasis added).

In other words, judges are required to authorize one human being to put to death another, obviously innocent, human being.

Judge Joseph W. Moylan (ret.)
Omaha, NE

William Bennett's January assessment reinforces Hadley Arkes' November comments depicting a culture seemingly incapable of provocation or "justifiable outrage." Too many are oblivious to Bennett's obvious example of infanticide (partial-birth abortion).

Yet it is troubling that Bennett speaks of "a procedure that is, for all intents and purposes, infanticide." Does this imply that other abortion procedures fall under another category? Each Advent, Luke 1:41-45 reminds us of an infant leaping in the womb upon hearing Mary's greeting, yet most of us do not recognize that the Bible uses the same word for unborn and born infants. *Brephoe*, the Greek word for "infant" in verse 41, applies to born infants in Luke 17:2; Hebrew Old Testament passages follow the same pattern. . . .

Steve Kipp
Colorado Springs, CO

In "To Reclaim Our Democratic Heritage" (January), the editors unbecomingly and unworthily refer to "the delusions of weekend revolutionaries" such as those of "angry men in army fatigues playing war games in the woods of Idaho."

Slurs indeed come easily against the distant and the unfamiliar. That doesn't excuse the offense.

It is demonstrably true that, on average, as compared with New Yorkers we Idahoans are better educated, more comfortable financially, more law-abiding, more traveled nationally and internationally, more conservative, more religiously observant, more optimistic (with good reason), more aware of the larger world, more participatory in public life, more at peace with our lives, less inclined to split infinitives, less insufferably pretentious, and less prone to take offense at first slings.

Stanley D. Crow
Boise, ID

The More the Merrier?

William McGurn ("Population and the Wealth of Nations," December 1996) is worried that the Catholic Church's position on the population issue looks "arbitrary and unintelligible." On the one hand recent popes concede the problem of overpopulation and on the other hand rule out as immoral the "artificial" birth control that has played a major role in reducing population growth rates.

McGurn would remove the "unintelligibility" by having the Church come around to his view that population growth is not a problem. McGurn's evidence is that Hong Kong's population has increased greatly in recent decades and that its *per-capita income has also increased*. But most observers would probably doubt that Hong Kong's population growth caused its economic growth, or, more fundamentally, that the experience of a city with complex economic interactions with China's Guangdong Province (including imports of both food and water) provides relevant lessons for entire countries.

Even Hong Kong's population growth is unusual in that it is due in large part to immigration, not to natural increase. A key fact is that potential parents in Hong Kong practice artificial contraception as assiduously as any place in the developing world. The total fertility rate in Hong Kong is only about 1.2 children per family. The other Asian countries McGurn suggests are evidence for the compatibility of rapid population growth and economic development (Korea and Taiwan) have also experienced declines in population growth rates due to widespread use of artificial contraception. These countries hardly serve as evidence that population growth promotes economic growth. Would these countries have experienced even more economic prosperity if their fertility rates had not fallen and if they had even larger populations than they have now? Do the governments and peoples of these economically successful countries have less insight into these matters than McGurn? . . .

Patrick Gormely
Department of Economics
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS

William McGurn replies:

Professor Gormley's letter is a good

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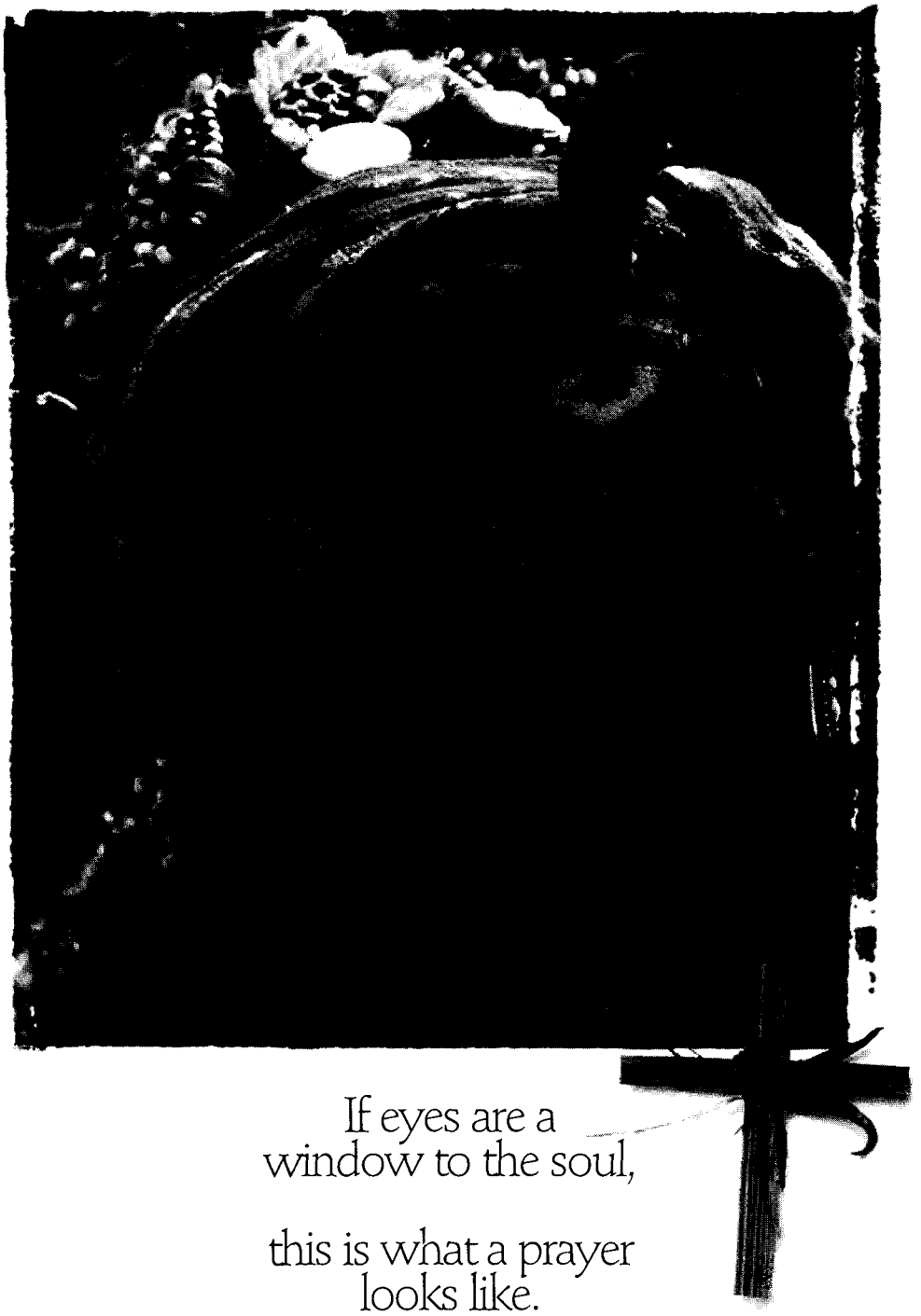

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one because it accurately reflects the logic behind the push for controlling population growth. I fear that as such it also reflects the misconceptions.

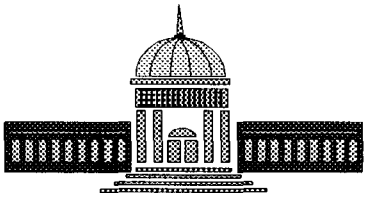
Let me treat the economic and theological issues separately. With regard to the former, I did not say that population growth "caused" Hong Kong's economic growth. The "cause" of that economic success is the openness and liberality of the Hong Kong market, which allows people to develop their talents. This emphasis on freedom is important because in statist economies additional people ultimately do end up becoming net economic burdens. This is why Hong Kong and Taiwan prospered while China languished.

More broadly, Professor Gormley *starts* from the assumption he ought to *prove* or at least debate: that population growth retards development. This has become an article of faith in certain quarters, but proof seldom goes further than pointing to poor countries with large populations. A more specific point: Hong Kong today may have "complex interactions with China," but that was not always the case. A UN-imposed embargo on China in the 1950s cut off the China market overnight—it was then Hong Kong's largest—and it did not recover it until the late 1970s and early 1980s. Yet the economic growth rates following that cutoff were higher then than they are today. Why? Because Hong Kong is free and open.

My second broad point is that often the confusion over population reflects a failure to distinguish between the impact of additional children on an individual family and the impact on society. I believe families should make their own decisions about family size. But people should not be made to think that by having children they are making their nations poorer. Children in a family are economic burdens, because they are dependents. But to societies they become contributing adults.

True, as economies get wealthier birthrates decline. But the mistake of people like Professor Gormley is to infer from this the opposite: that lower birthrates mean wealthier economies. Asia is coming to this recognition belatedly, as its rapidly greying societies—the process in Japan and China is faster than anything in the West—require higher taxes today to pay for tomorrow's burden. This helps explain why Singapore has gone from campaigns promoting "stop at two" to "have three or more."

Finally, on theology. If the Pope is right that we should shun artificial birth control—and, more to the point, that children are a genuine good—I don't see how it could be that larger families will have bad consequences for society. Morality is not an arbitrary list of do's and don'ts: the more we do the right thing (such as telling the truth, not stealing, etc.) the better off our neighbors will be. A God who designed a world that punished society when people did the right thing wouldn't be a God. He'd be a devil.



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Evangelical Catholicity

As a Protestant who aspires to evangelical catholicity, and an editor of a magazine (*Touchstone*) with similar aspirations, I read James Nuechterlein's "In Defense of Sectarian Catholicity" (January) empathetically—until I got to the end where he spoke of women's ordination as something evangelical catholics like himself will "not retreat on." Although the Lerentian canon—"what has been believed everywhere, in all times, by all Christians"—is an intuitive and imprecise rule of catholic faith and unity, it is very hard to understand how someone who regards himself as catholic in any historically meaningful sense would insist upon the orthodoxy of a practice that has been accepted nowhere, at no time, and by nobody.

Except, that is, if one regards the sects and denominations by which women's ordination has been advanced as "somebody." In that case I would counsel a good Lutheran to have a close look at their theological and moral condition, and consider some of the other notable discoveries of the inclusive sort they are happening upon these days. It seems to me that a reasonable man, even if he found the logic behind the arguments for women's ordination compelling, would find its source so profoundly suspect that a change of opinion and a subsequent retreat would be somewhat more than thinkable.

S. M. Hutchens, Chairman
Fellowship of St. James
Chicago, IL

An aside by James Nuechterlein conveys an oft-expressed view that has bothered me for some time: "To most of us in the West, Orthodoxy is not, for cultural reasons, a live option." The retort, of course, is why not? Religion is certainly too important a matter to be circumscribed by culture, especially in the apparently narrow sense of the term that Mr. Nuechterlein employs. And what would have been the fate of Christianity among the West Europeans if they had uniformly turned away those Middle Eastern Jewish missionaries in their midst for cultural reasons?

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Let's face it. Eastern Orthodoxy is in our midst today and is receiving a steady stream of converts who are apparently concerned about theological truth. (I am Anglican, not Orthodox.) Of course, these conversions are facilitated by such things as an Orthodox Church in America which appears to be trying very hard to be nonethnic and an Antiochian Orthodox Church with a Western Rite subgrouping using Anglican or Roman liturgies. Such manifestations would seem to be going a long way toward removing the main obstacle to conversion of those with cultural "hang-ups," (including James Nuechterlein?).

Wallace Spaulding
McLean, VA

While James Nuechterlein's editorial comments are appreciated, three problems loom before anyone who might want to adopt his attitude toward being a sectarian catholic, the third being most decisive.

In order to believe in catholicism as conceived by most Lutheran evangelical catholics, one must believe in an invisible Church, as Martin Luther did. . . . The notion of an invisible Church is simply unpalatable in the twentieth century.

The second problem is that it is becoming increasingly obvious that those who march under the banner of evangelical catholicism do not all mean the same thing by it. The title is seemingly all that is in common for this mixture of theologians, pastors, and laity. For some it means liturgical worship, for others matters of ethics, and for still others matters of church structures, e.g., bishops. There is no binding theological glue save the certainty that what they all do not mean is Roman Catholicism. . . .

But the most severe irritant to a serene acceptance of James Nuechterlein's worldview is that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) now pays for abortions, implicating all of us who are pastors or members in this church on the dark side of the greatest moral crisis of our time. The house is being called on this issue. . . .

(The Rev.) Jeffrey C. Silleck
Reformation Lutheran Church
Eastlake, OH

I want to express my profound gratitude for the colloquy between editors Neuhaus and Nuechterlein about their respective Catholic and Lutheran traditions. It reflects to a large

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extent my own religious struggle. I was raised a Lutheran (the old American Lutheran Church), but left that tradition in my early adulthood to embrace evangelical Protestantism. I underwent a "born again" experience in graduate school, and for many years saw in evangelicalism the only true Christianity.

Maturity, reflection, and good reading (such as FIRST THINGS) have broadened my horizons to an "ecumenical orthodoxy" embracing the faithful of all three great Christian traditions: Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant. Indeed I now find myself troubled by the distinctly nonhistorical stance of much of evangelicalism, and therefore drawn to the arguments of the editors about their two great confessional faiths.

For me, Lutheranism in its historic form is the noble faith of Martin Luther, the Augsburg Confession, and all that the early Reformation represents. I am troubled, however, by what Lutheranism has become today: weak on abortion and evasive in its approach to homosexuality. Thus Roman Catholicism is attractive today for its principled stands on the historic faith and traditional morality. I hesitate only to the extent that the Reformation doctrinal struggles have yet to be fully resolved. Here evangelicalism is attractive, both historically (to the extent that it has a history) and presently, but often this new Christian shoot displays its lack of maturity, prudence, and perspective.

To stay or to go? I am grateful for the irenic discourse of Father Neuhaus and Mr. Nuechterlein on these subjects.

William Reichert
Palos Verdes, CA

James Nuechterlein replies:

S. M. Hutchens suggests that even if one finds "the logic behind the arguments for women's ordination compelling," that logic should be resisted because its source is "so profoundly suspect." I mean no disrespect, but that argument reminds me of the claim certain right-wingers used to make to the effect that free public education was a bad idea because Karl Marx had supported it in *The Communist Manifesto*. I support women's ordination because I have found none of the arguments against it theologically persuasive. In any case, I see the issue as one of arguable church practice, not dogmatic necessity.

Wallace Spaulding takes me to task for my (literally) parenthetical remark that, for most of us in the West, Orthodoxy is not a live option. I was making a sociocultural observation, not a theological judgment. Until very recently, Orthodoxy has been seen as the expression of Eastern, not Western, Christianity. That may well now be changing, as Mr. Spaulding suggests. But even though I hope I have no lingering "cultural hang-ups" on the subject, I suspect that Orthodoxy will remain unavailable to many evangelical catholics for reasons similar to those that separate them from Rome.

Jeffrey C. Silleck finds three problems with evangelical catholicity. First, he says, it requires belief in an "invisible Church." Not at all. It requires rather the belief, as I noted in my article, that the quite visible Church has more than one valid historical manifestation. Pastor Silleck further notes that people who regard themselves as evangelical catholics do not all mean precisely the same thing when they use the term. True enough, but so what? Christians of all persuasions have differed among themselves from the first century onwards. Evangelical catholics are hardly distinctive on that score. Finally, I agree that current ELCA practice on abortion is an abomination. I note only that the church's official position on the issue—while not as forthright as it should be—nonetheless opposes abortion on demand. Its doctrine, in other words, is better than its practice.

I thank William Reichert (along with the many others who have written to me personally) for his generous comments.

More Catholic, Less catholic?

I hope that FIRST THINGS is not in the process of becoming less catholic in its appeal to evangelical conservatives among its readership by becoming more assertively Catholic. "The realization grows" on Richard John Neuhaus "that orthodoxy and catholicity can be underwritten only by Orthodoxy and Catholicism" (Public Square, January). One supposes that this is more than a rhetorically elegant argument by capitalization—for presumably Orthodoxy is not granted total claim to orthodoxy, nor Catholicism laying total claim to catholicity. This suggests that even within this privileged pairing of Catholicism and Orthodoxy something of division, even of sectarianism, is inescapable.

But unlike James Nuechterlein, I feel no need to justify my own position in terms of "sectarian catholicity"—or for that matter "heterodox orthodoxy" (if that is the corresponding phrase). Instead, I want to assert that Roman Catholicism carries within itself its own sectarian principle, in the qualification "Roman." Jerusalem Catholicism I would gladly live with, or Galilean or Nazarene Catholicism, but why "Roman," rather than another topographical label from some other significant staging-post in the growth to universality of the catholic Church? . . .

If there has to be individual primacy in the coming Great Church, a less sectarian model would allow for its circulation—to Jerusalem, Alexandria, Constantinople, Canterbury, Wittenberg, Geneva, and why not Iona and Edinburgh and Oxford (for Methodism, not Anglo-Catholicism)? Then Catholicism might be more catholic, and fewer sectarian skeletons would rattle in Roman cupboards.

D. F. Wright
Senior Lecturer
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Islam and Freedom

Hats off to Joshua Muravchik for his perspicacious review of John Voll and John Esposito's new book *Islam and Democracy* ("Can Muslims Be Democrats?" January). As Muravchik bravely points out, democratic ideals are not infinitely elastic and, not possessing such a quality, are not easily

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reconcilable with the system of government and the kinds of laws one observes in practice in traditional Islamic states. Unfortunately, the kind of "blather" and "apologetic exercises in cultural relativism" Mr. Muravchik observes coming from Professors Voll and Esposito typify the kind of books and articles produced by a number of today's academics with the shining exception, perhaps, of Princeton's emeritus professor of Middle East history Bernard Lewis, who has himself written eloquently about the sizable gulf between the political theories of Islam and those of the secular, democratic West.

Had authors Voll and Esposito been so inclined, they might have expanded their study to include an analysis not just of democracy in the traditional Islamic world (or the lack thereof) but also Islamic concepts of law, human rights, commercial relations, etc. But this would only have proven Mr. Muravchik's (and my) point: There is a significant gulf in practice and profound differences in theory between Islam and the West on these and other defining issues.

Anthony J. Dennis
South Windsor, CT

In his view of *Islam and Democracy*, Joshua Muravchik implies that "freedom" and "democracy" are synonymous, and goes on to cite statistics showing that Africa's nations are more democratic and free than are those of the Islamic world. But are those persons living in the African "democracies" really free in any meaningful sense? Russell Kirk reminds us that the ends of the state are to secure order, justice, and freedom, and that of these order has primacy, for only when order is established can there be freedom and justice. Most of the African democracies have failed miserably in achieving societal order; to live in a chaotic and anarchic world—even one with frequent elections—is not to enjoy freedom.

In the zeal to bring "freedom" to Islamic countries it ought to be remembered that democracy is no gain if it means the abolition of those traditions, customs, and institutions that bring order to society. For then, "democracy" brings only more tyranny. Reform in the Islamic world must be gradual and prudent.

Jeremy M. Beer
Austin, TX

Joshua Muravchik replies:

I thank Anthony Dennis for his kind words. Jeremy Beer's letter is very airy. What exactly does it mean to be free in a "meaningful sense" as opposed to just being free? What are the thresholds of chaos and anarchy below which one can "enjoy freedom"? Which of the small number of African democracies has "failed miserably" and how? His warning that democracy, by destroying tradition, breeds tyranny is highly abstract. One can imagine a few places in the contemporary Islamic world where this warning is germane, but most of the dictatorships there are far from traditional. They are the products of anticolonial or postcolonial upheavals.

In Defense of Rock

After reading Father Neuhaus' diatribe against rock music (Public Square, January), I must protest.

Piggy-backed by hyperbolic quotes from two avowed rock music haters, Allan Bloom and Richard Brookhiser, Fr. Neuhaus errs dramatically. First, he mischaracterizes as monolithic a sonically varied and culturally diverse musical style. His next fallacy is that "the music requires no talent." Such a proposition is not shared by virtually any musician who has experimented with the form.

It is with the article's second thrust, though, that the worst offense is committed. Quoted approvingly are Brookhiser's canards that the music "aims downward in class" and is nothing more than "the rhythms of bumpkins." If the IQs of the listeners of a musical form can condemn it, might not there be a few mentally deficient Mozart fans out there? If so, what does that mean about classical music? Much, under this proposition. . . .

As for its use in church liturgies, I too prefer Bach to rock. But this does not mean rock music has no place in religion or worship. Rock music can be a terrific tool in religious education. I start each of the confirmation classes I teach by playing the catechists a taped song—one with overtly Christ-centered lyrics. The song is always by a non-"religious" rock group (playing a gospel song or one

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from a "religious rock group" would defeat the purpose). I do this to show the kids that even their heroes often end up "publicly" addressing faith issues or expressing Christian views. The kids should feel comfortable doing the same.

Certainly rock, like all of secular society, is full of sinners. But then, Christ did not come to heal the healthy, did He?

Benjamin J. Eicher
Rapid City, SD

Population Policy in China

Please permit me to offer a critique of Richard John Neuhaus' brief statement in the Public Square (January): "The shameless behavior . . . of the Clinton Administration in not letting massive human rights violations interfere with making a buck has reached new heights." Father Neuhaus quotes a news story concerning a vice president of an American pharmaceutical company that has involved itself, with permission of the Clinton Administration, in contraceptive research to assist China's program of population control: "[The vice president expressed] his hope that the contraceptive [Depo-Provera] provides a new choice for the Chinese women." Fr. Neuhaus remarks that "It may not exactly be choice, but some [Chinese] women may prefer [the U.S. company's contraceptive injection] to being forced to undergo an abortion for violating China's law against more than one child per couple."

There is a human-rights context for the information you provide that is quite different from the ideological interpretation you present.

In June 1981, I traveled in China for eighteen days with fifteen or so obstetricians and gynecologists and their companions. We visited maternity wards in hospitals in several cities and met with physicians and public officials. Both Chinese physicians and those from my group presented lectures. China's one-child-per-family policy was a major theme in each series of lectures. In addition, I took the opportunity to quiz our translators and tour guides about the purpose and the anticipated consequences of the one-child policy. . . .

Demographic and economic experts in China apparently argued persuasively that a population exceeding one billion would offer severe obstacles to the modernization of the Chinese system, that a long-term plan to reduce the population to its size at the beginning of the Maoist period—about 600 million—would be preferable. . . .

Resort to abortion, administered as early after pregnancy as possible, was decided upon as the most humane, economical, and effective means of preventing a disastrous population explosion. Indeed, through U.S. eyes and hearts, the Chinese program may seem cruel, a denial of rights of women (and men too). But if we place the program in the context of a demographically threatened China, it takes on dramatically different meaning. . . .

Is it not proper to suggest that an editor and a magazine that profess Christian values give humble and compassionate consideration to the proposition that China's one-child-per-family policy, and the pharmaceutical research you consider repugnant, may be at least as human-rights oriented as the alternative position you seem to be promoting?

Leonard D. Cain
Portland, OR

RJN replies:

I don't know about humble and compassionate, but I have certainly given careful consideration to China's population policies. The killing of innocent unborn children, the assault on parental responsibility for families, and the violent abuse of women are antithetical to any policy that can meaningfully be called "human-rights oriented." As Amartya Sen of Harvard and other scholars have pointed out, "overpopulation" is a term that defies clear definition. The last people on earth to be trusted on these questions are those responsible for a regime that killed more than thirty million of its own people in a government-contrived famine, and still today imprisons many thousands in slave labor camps, among its other monstrous crimes.

On White Teutonic Racism

The December 1996 Public Square comment by Father Neuhaus made a big stink that the burnings of black churches in the South last winter didn't really happen but were drummed up by the National Council of Churches to parlay "white guilt" into big money. . . .

When will Fr. Neuhaus wake up and smell the kerosene? The White Anglo-Saxon Protestant bigotry notorious in America since 1630 is based on a deep strain of racism in the Nordic Teutonic peoples, factions of whom have held themselves to be a Master Race since at least 3000 B.C., when they commenced condemning white Slavs into slavery in the "civilized Mediterranean"; continued through the Calvinist Pre-Destinationist Heresy and the notorious Anglo-American "man-stealing" of black Africans to slavery in the U.S. South; proceeded to Hitlerite Teutonic Racism; and continue today as the Anglo-Aryan militia fanatics who apparently are burning black (and now white Catholic) churches.

Even Harold O. J. Brown, the notorious Protestant Aryan at *Religion and Society Report*, isn't taken in by Fr. Neuhaus' pollyanna attitude. In the December issue of that review, Brown opines that—to paraphrase him—even if "sola Scriptura" and "sola fide" and "sola Christus" were found out to be false and the Protestants sought to go back to unity with Rome, there would still be the quintessential Calvinist doctrine of "election for some, damnation for others," which is just the modern ideology for ages-old white teutonic racism.

Any reply, Fr. Neuhaus?

Tom Kuna-Jacob
Quincy, IL

RJN replies:

I wouldn't know where to begin.

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This Time

My Own Private Rushmore

James Nuechterlein

It's fun playing God—even in the limited form of offering grand historical judgments. My introduction to godlike authority came when the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) recently asked me to be part of a panel commissioned to rank U.S. Presidents.

The idea of ranking Presidents is not a new one. It began a half century ago when Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., the eminent Harvard historian, invited fifty-five prominent scholars to join him in rating all the Chief Executives to that time. The results, published in 1948 in *Life* magazine, generated considerable attention and controversy. The game has been played many times since, most recently in the December 15, 1996 issue of the *New York Times Magazine*. That poll was presided over, appropriately enough, by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., a distinguished historian in his own right.

It was the *Times*' poll that prompted the ISI to conduct its own ranking. It found the list of scholars on the Schlesinger jury to be ideologically unbalanced (read, mostly liberal), and decided to appoint its own, presumably more evenhanded, panel. (I have no idea who my fellow jurors are.) It is not surprising, of course, that the Schlesinger panel tilted to the left—everything in academia tilts to the left.

It will be interesting to see, when the ISI results are published, how much they differ from earlier polls. Most rankings, following the elder Schlesinger's original pattern, rate the Presidents as Great, Near Great, Average, Below Average, or Failure. As Schlesinger, Jr. notes, "the choice of best and worst Presidents has remained relatively stable through the years." George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin D. Roosevelt "are always at the top." They are regularly followed, in various order, by Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, James Polk, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Harry Truman. The Failures are invariably headed up by Ulysses Grant and Warren Harding, with Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan, and Calvin Coolidge normally joining them at or near the bottom. The Schlesinger poll rates Taylor, Fillmore, and Coolidge as merely Below Average and expands the Failure category to include Andrew Johnson, Herbert Hoover, and Richard Nixon.

Where one ranks Presidents depends, of course, on the criteria employed. The most obvious temptation is to rate them high or low depending on how closely their views correspond to one's ideological preferences. Thus, for example, a conservative in knee-jerk mode might reverse the conventional wisdom and rate FDR a Failure and Coolidge a Great or Near Great. But that kind of ideological determinism—the kind that led thirteen of Schlesinger's thirty-two colleagues to rank Ronald Reagan Below Average or Failure—betrays a failure both of historical imagination and of scholarly impartiality.

My three criteria of judgment were: impact on national development, impact on the particular historical moment, and impact on the office of the presidency. If one word would have to do, it would be leadership. I also based my rankings on the individual's record only while in office: thus Grant, a great general, remains a lousy President.

My Greats, as it turns out, coincide with the scholarly consensus. No one can deny Washington, and only the most die-hard partisan of the Confederacy can deny Lincoln. They remain our national icons, the standards against which all others must be measured. FDR is a harder case, but even conservatives have to concede that he provided compelling leadership in the two greatest national crises of our century—the Depression and World War II—and that he remade the presidential office. One can deplore his philosophical lightmindedness and still agree (swallowing hard) that he has to be included in the national pantheon.

In the Near Great category, I concur with the Schlesinger panel on Jackson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Wilson (though Wilson's a close call because a combination of illness and stubborn self-righteousness made the last years of his presidency a disaster). But I would demote Polk—it is for good reason that most Americans aren't quite sure who he was or what he's doing in this company—and, more controversially, Jefferson and Truman.

Jefferson was a great American but only a middling President. He had a bad conscience about his greatest achievement—the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory—and he maneuvered ineffectually in struggling to maintain American neutrality during the Napoleonic wars. Truman had the good sense to follow the lead of George Marshall, Dean Acheson, (the early) George Kennan, et al. in foreign policy, but his domestic record was a misbegotten disaster. He could be—too often was—petty, doctrinaire, and narrowly partisan, and he held an unseemly but utterly unshakable confidence in his rightness on all things. His approval ratings while in office—the lowest of any modern President save Nixon at the depths of Watergate—reflected the scorn with which most Americans of the time regarded him.

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To replace Jefferson and Truman, I would promote both Reagan and Dwight Eisenhower from Average to Near Great status. Whatever one thinks of his ideology, Reagan revitalized his party, reinvigorated the office of President, and redefined the terms of American political discourse—not to mention presiding over the end of the Cold War. He had a magnificent presidential personality, and he conducted the public and ceremonial duties of his office as well as anyone who has held it. Eisenhower, who was far more politically astute than is often thought, led the nation through an unprecedented period of consensus and good feelings. Americans have never thought better of themselves and their nation than they did in the 1950s, and no small part of that was the trust, affection, and admiration they felt for Ike.

I agree with the Schlesinger poll on the Failures, with two exceptions. Hoover was the victim of the Great Depression, not its cause, and while his personality was unsuited to the crisis he faced, he was not at all the do-nothing President the Democrats held him to be. Below Average is judgment enough. As to ranking Nixon, one simply, as with so much else about the man, throws up one's hands. Watergate brands him a Failure, yet he doesn't really belong in the company of Grant, Harding, and Buchanan. His considerable successes elsewhere could place him as high as Near Great, and in the end I judge him Average, though he doesn't really belong there either. Nixon needs his own category.

As to other recent Presidents, the Schlesinger panel places John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and George Bush all in the Average category, although JFK and LBJ get better scores than the others. I generally agree, though I think Bush will edge upward over time (almost solely on the basis of the Gulf War) and I would drop Carter to Below Average. He came into office with high popularity and promising opportunities, but he turned out to be an ineffectual moralizer with a distant and disagreeable personality.

Finally, the Schlesinger poll ranks the current incumbent (who, according to reports, frequently muses over his own eventual place in the ratings game) as Average, which seems about right. Bill Clinton is a man of considerable talent who demeans himself by acting as if he were in a perpetual race for Student Senate President. He wants everyone to love him—with the result that no one really trusts him. He is the master of serial sincerity. He displayed his impressive political skills in repositioning himself in the center after 1994 and winning reelection against what seemed heavy odds, but he has yet to persuade most Americans that he possesses an authentic public self.

Presidential reputations, in the end, are the product not of History but of historians' fallible and shifting judgments. They depend also, to no small extent, on sheer dumb luck. Great critical situations do not by themselves generate great presidencies, but they do seem to be their precondition. Extraordinary leadership is a gift of the gods, but its exercise is often an accident of history. Theodore Roosevelt always regretted that as President he never confronted a crisis severe enough to put his leadership skills fully to the test. But that suggests a cautionary note: for all my admiration for TR, I have always been uneasy with his restless eagerness to press fate in order that he might most dramatically exhibit his charismatic gifts. One is the more in awe of Lincoln, the greatest American, because he accepted as burden rather than gift the terrible occasion of his greatness. FT

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Opinion

The Myth of Soulless Women

Michael Nolan

Josh Billings remarked profoundly that "the trouble with people is not that they don't know but that they know so much as ain't so." There are those who know John Chrysostom said that "the image of God is not found in Woman." (Actually, he said that "the image of God is not found in Man or Woman.") There are those who know that Thomas Aquinas said that a woman is a defective male. (Actually, he explicitly denies this no fewer than five times.) There are those who know that Aristotle said that a woman is a deficient male—a description based on an appalling mistranslation.

And there are those who know that an early council of bishops, held at Macon in Burgundy, France in A.D. 585 decreed that women do not have a soul. The bishops of course decreed no such thing, for if women do not have a soul how could they be baptized, how receive the Eucharist, how be venerated as martyrs in heaven? Yet it may be worthwhile to look at the story of this alleged decree, for one can see a myth in the making.

The story begins, innocently enough, in the late sixteenth century. A young scholar, Valentius Acidalius, was working as a teacher in Silesia, and, like many young scholars, he was short of money. He thought to turn an honest penny by publishing a "diverting" pamphlet. In Latin the word *homo*, like the word *man* in English, primarily means "a human being, male or female, young or old," but has the secondary meaning of "adult male." Valentius thought it would be fun to use this ambiguity to "show" that in the Bible only adult males have souls. If he thought the pamphlet would amuse, he was grievously wrong. Simon Geddicus, a Lutheran scholar, launched a mighty counter-pamphlet entitled *A Defense of the Female Sex*, in which he proposed "manfully" (he actually uses the word *viriliter*) to "destroy each and every one of the arguments put forward by Valentius," who, the reader will learn with regret or satisfaction as the case may be, took a seizure and died.

The pamphlet, however, often bound with the refutation by Simon Geddicus, survived, and it appears that it was published at Lyons in France in 1647. It was now in Italian, and was entitled *Women do not have a soul and do not belong to the human race, as is shown by many passages of Holy Scripture.* One gathers from a commentator that "the ladies of Italy took this system very differently. Some were vexed to have no souls. Others were pretty indifferent about the matter, and looking on themselves as mere machines, hoped to set their springs so well agoing as to make the men stark mad." Not all the ladies were silent, and the splendidly named Archangela Tarabotti wrote *A Defense of Women.* One way or another, the offending book caught the attention of Pope Innocent X, who put it on the Index of Prohibited Books (Decree of June 18, 1651). So much for the allegation that the Church holds that women do not have souls.

But the suggestion that women do not have souls was obviously in the air. It apparently came to the ears of Johannes Leyser, a Lutheran pastor from the region of Frankfurt in Germany, for he took up the idea and then sought confirmation for it in the doings of the Council of Macon, a small council of some forty-three bishops held in Burgundy in the year 585. Leyser had become a chaplain in the Danish army. The excitements, and no doubt opportunities, of military life seem to have sharpened his zest for feminine variety, for in 1676 he published a volume called *The Triumph of Polygamy*, in which he proclaimed the merits of a plurality of wives. Seeking support for his view that women are inferior, he decided to misquote the decrees of the Council of Macon. Leyser wrote: "Among the holy fathers [at the Council] there was one who insisted that women cannot, and should not, be called 'human beings' (*homines*). The matter was thought so important that it was discussed publicly and in the fear of God. Finally, after many arguments on this question, [the bishops] concluded that women are human after all."

Now this is wholly untrue. The acts of the Council of Macon contain no such discussion. They contain neither the word "woman" nor the word "soul." What Leyser did was to misinterpret a story told in *The History of the Franks* by St. Gregory of Tours. Gregory was bishop of that city in the sixth century and wrote a splendid history of the region. At one point he tells of a council that may, or may not, have been the Council of Macon. Gregory writes:

> There came forward at this Council a certain bishop who maintained that woman could not be included under the term "man." However, he accepted the reasoning of the other bishops and did not press his case for the holy book of the Old Testament tells us that in the beginning, when God created man, "Male and female he created them and called their name Adam,"

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> which means earthly man; even so, he called the woman Eve, yet of both he used the word "man."

So what the bishops discussed was the meaning of a word, not the substantial issue of whether women have souls.

Leyser was inventing stories. His untruths were taken up by Pierre Bayle, a Dutch Calvinist with a marked distaste for the Catholicism to which he had once adhered. Bayle brought the matter further by writing in his *Dictionnaire*: "What I think yet more strange is to find that in a Council it has been gravely proposed as a question whether women were human creatures, and that it was determined affirmatively [only] after a long debate." Early in the nineteenth century a certain M. Aime-Martin wrote a touching book on *The Education of Mothers* in which he recorded sorrowfully that "people had gone so far as to doubt the existence of their souls." Politicians, as is their way, saw an opportunity, and the French National Assembly, no less, deplored the Church's insult to women. Later still the myth appeared in English in a journal titled *John Bull*, published by Horatio Bottomley, a fraudster Member of the British Parliament who would soon end in jail.

The myth was by now securely established, and will no doubt be retailed as confidently in the future as it has been in the past. If the first casualty of war is the unwelcome truth, the first weapon of the discontented is the welcome lie.

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Tobacco and the Soul

Michael P. Foley

The current brouhaha over smoking has made everyone painfully aware of tobacco's effects on the body, but it has also obscured a more profound reason for smoking's popularity: its relation to the soul. As the heyday of smoking passes into the ash-heap of history, it is meet that we reflect on this connection.

The soul, of course, is a complex thing. Long ago Plato suggested that we consider it as divided into three parts—the appetitive, spirited, and rational—that correspond to the three basic kinds of human desires: the desire to satisfy physical appetites, the desire for recognition, and the desire for truth. Once this tripartite division is recalled, tobacco's relation to the soul becomes clear: the three prevalent types of smoking tobacco—cigarettes, cigars, and pipes—correspond to the three parts of the soul.

Cigarettes correspond to the appetitive part of the soul, a fact that explains their association with both food and sex. The connection with the latter is particularly obvious: think of the proverbial postcoital cigarette, or of the ubiquity of cigarettes at singles bars. People with strong physical desires demand instant gratification, and they try to make what they desire as much a part of their own bodies as possible: hunger demands eating, thirst drinking, and lust making the body of one's lover a part of one's own. So too with cigarettes. A cigarette is inhaled: it must be fully and internally consumed in order to give pleasure. And a cigarette, with its quick buzz, is also instant gratification. Even the cigarette's notorious connection to death ties it into appetites: both are indifferent to health in their quest for satisfaction, and both, when they reach addictive levels, become hostile to it.

Cigars, on the other hand, correspond to the spirited part of the soul. This explains their traditional popularity among men seeking honor or reputation—politicians, executives, etc. The reason for this correspondence can be found in the similarity between cigars and ambition. A cigar is visually impressive: with its large size and great billows of smoke, it often leaves a greater impact on the spectator than on the smoker. Further, a cigar is phallic—not with regard to male lust, but to male power. "Testis" in Latin means "witness": the phallic status of the cigar is meant to bear public witness to the smoker's prominence, his virility. The fact that a cigar is not inhaled reflects this external focus.

Ambition also has these traits: it too is more external than internal. Unlike physical desires, which are satisfied simply by consumption, ambition requires the consensus of others. The honor-seeker, for example, has to be honored by as many people as possible in order to be satisfied.

Finally, the pipe corresponds to the rational part of the soul, which explains why we tend to picture wise figures smoking pipes: the Oxford don surrounded by his great books, or Sherlock Holmes, who, in Doyle's original stories, actually smoked other sorts of tobacco as well, yet is almost always portrayed with a pipe. Unlike cigars and cigarettes, a pipe endures. Similarly, the questions of the philosopher far outlast the passing concerns of physical desires on the one hand and human ambitions on the other. Further, while the cigar is entirely masculine, the pipe has both masculine and feminine elements (the stem and the bowl). This corresponds to the philosopher's activity, which is both masculine and femi-

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nine: masculine in its pursuit of Lady Truth, feminine in its reception of anything that she discloses. Finally, the effect that the pipe has on others is analogous to the effect of philosophizing: the sweet fragrance of a pipe, like good philosophy, is a blessing to all who are near.

It is fitting that all three kinds of smoking tobacco involve the use of fire, for each relates to the soul's responsiveness to reason, and fire, at least from the days of Prometheus, is especially emblematic of reason. But there are also nonhuman parts to the human soul. The growth of our hair and fingernails, for example, is due to the soul's activity, yet is not responsive to rational instruction.

The use of tobacco that does not involve fire, therefore, somehow corresponds to these nonhuman—or more accurately, subhuman—parts of the soul. Chewing tobacco, for example, is a quintessentially subhuman activity. It is the rumination of bovine men. Or perhaps we should say it is camel-like, for camels not only chew, but spit as well. In either case, the point is clear: chewing tobacco is a sub-rational activity, which is why we usually associate it with men of limited acumen.

Snuff, too, would fall into this category, but with some minor differences. First, because it is not so disgusting, it would not have the same negative connotations as "chew." (Activities can be sub-rational without being bad.) Second, snuff taken through the nose would fall under a different category. Everything else we have seen involves the mouth, and this is only natural, for the mouth was made to receive things into itself. But to sniff something up one's nose . . . this is unnatural.

A question remains, however, about smoking non-tobacco. One candidate immediately comes to mind because it, like tobacco, is a natural leaf. Marijuana is also noteworthy because it is used in the same ways as smoking tobacco.

The key to the difference between the two is how each one affects the smoker. Tobacco—whether in a cigarette, cigar, or a pipe—leads to conversation, loosening the tongue just enough to incline it towards speaking, but not enough to disconnect it from the brain. Marijuana, on the other hand, does not keep this balance, loosening the tongue only to have it reel away from rational thought. It does not truly facilitate conversation, drawing the smoker into himself (not outwards, as does all good conversation) and dumbing-down any speech that *is* uttered. Thus the appearance of conversation can be created, but it is usually only that—an appearance. Marijuana is therefore a charlatan-weed, an impostor that apes its distant relative tobacco in a shallow and perverse way.

The uses of marijuana are twisted imitations of the uses of tobacco. Joints perversely imitate cigarettes in both their appearance and in their users' claim to be erotic. But while the claim is one thing, the reality is another. Eros requires both a healthy tension and a sense of discrimination in order to be truly human. Marijuana, however, eliminates both. Think of the counterculture of the 1960s, which, in preaching sexual liberation, actually destroyed the human part of our sexuality by robbing sex of any sense of mystery, standards, or fidelity. Where once sex was a magical moment between eternally committed lovers, it was now purely animalistic, something that had no more meaning than any other bodily function. The pot-smoker fancies himself an erotic man, but ends up being an unerotic animal.

Similarly, the hash pipe is a perverse imitation of the tobacco pipe. The pot-smoker often fancies himself an intellectual: he gets high and thinks "deep thoughts" (again bringing the 1960s to mind). But the appearance is one thing, the reality another. Just as the wisdom of the 1960s student turns out to be sophomoric, so too do the deep thoughts of the pot-smoker end up being moronic.

And yes, there is even a marijuana counterpart to the cigar. In the early 1990s the inner cities gave birth to a new practice called "blunting," in which cheap cigars are gutted and stuffed with marijuana. It is fitting that this practice originated in the same place where gangs come from. An inner-city gang seems supremely concerned with honor and courage: its elaborate codes would suggest as much. But seeming is one thing, being another. The gang-member fancies himself honorable, but is in reality a thug. Just as the cigar is the counterpart to the real virtues of honor and courage, the marijuana-blunt is the counterpart to the fake virtues of gang-honor and gang-courage.

As every student of Plato knows, if something has a relation to the soul it has a relation to the city. Thus if our theory is anything more than the smoke it purports to explain, it can be used to analyze political phenomena. For example, in recent years we have witnessed a concerted effort to sterilize our erotic attachments, to sap them of their danger but also of their vigor. The flat, unerotic words we now use for these attachments confirm this. Instead of "lover" and "beloved," we now have "significant other" and, even worse, "partner" (a term which lends to the affairs of the heart all the excitement of filling out a tax form). Given this environment, it is no wonder that our most vigorous moral war waged today is against cigarette-smoking. Nor is it any wonder that this war's only rival in intensity is the one in favor of "safe sex," for condoms sterilize sex not only literally but figuratively as well.

Further, the relation between cigars and spiritedness may explain why cigars are now for the first time gaining a significant number of female disciples. For as women continue to enter the traditionally male world of competition, many are beating men at

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their own game by using the same tactics of gaining power. And with the tactics have come the symbols.

Most significantly, however, the relative rarity of pipe-smoking in America is a telling sign of its current intellectual crisis. If the pipe epitomizes the intellectual way of life, then is it any surprise that it cannot be found where schools substitute politically correct ideology for real philosophy, or where the intelligentsia, instead of engaging in serious thought, pander to the latest activist fads? Is it any surprise that America's most famous pipe-smoker in the last thirty years has been Hugh Hefner, pajama prophet of the trite philosophy of hedonism? No, the age of the pipe-smoker is as far from us as the day when philosophers will be kings and kings will philosophize, a sad reality to which the thick blue haze of non-pipe smoke is only too ready to attest.

It should also be no surprise in this pipeless age that the ferocious battle over tobacco has missed the real point about its addictive power. Tobacco holds sway over the soul as much as it does the body. The qualities it takes in its various forms make it a near irresistible complement to the particular desire dominant in an individual's soul. How we react to these forms says as much about our attitude toward those desires as it does toward the weed itself.

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Baptism

Honorarius handed his robe to the catechumen
And picked around the bones of the Creed.

These are rough times, bitter times,
Even the tent makers aren't working.
And Chrysalis, the weaver, and her daughter,
Plunged through the neck
After seven desperate hours on the grill.
Robes are scarce, and Christians share.

The word had come down from Phrygia
Through Rabelae, a good man, and steady.
"It is worse than the days of Decius."
And some say even Nero, but how could that be,
Garroted to young ash trees,
Lighting the way to the feasting halls?

It could be.
The soldier-emperor, son of a slave,
Sharer with his comrades-in-arms.
Now wearing a diadem of pearls.
It could be. Madness? Diocletian?
Or maybe the libellus again.

But now the vestibule was ready,
The candles lit, the necks craned
To watch the brilliant hosts go down in glory
And rise again to a new life of light.
"I will always be faithful . . ."
"I will always be faithful . . ."

The night through the open door
Seemed to Honorarius like a black cocoon.

Daniel Gallio

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Creatures of Place and Time: Reflections on Moving

Gilbert Meilaender

My family and I moved last summer, moving to Valparaiso, Indiana from Oberlin, Ohio, where we had lived for eighteen years. Now, eighteen years is a reasonably long time in anyone's life. It constitutes the bulk of the life of my children, and almost the entire life of several of them. It is by far the longest that my wife and I have lived anywhere in our years of marriage.

We are told, of course, that ours is a highly mobile society, but those statistical averages reflect quite different experiences. Some people, perhaps because of the demands of work, may move every five years. (In academia we call them "assistant professors.") That is, I suspect, a different experience from moving after eighteen years in a place. I am sure it has quite a different feel, and knowing that one will probably move again in five years must have an incalculable effect on the experience. And, of course, some people never move. So what I have to say may reflect not only the peculiarities of my temperament but also a particular kind of experience. Moreover, because our experiences are different, one has to be cautious when reflecting theologically, as I do here, upon an experience. One's tone must be less prescriptive than exploratory.

One other caveat is worth mentioning at the outset. There is an important sense in which it makes no difference at all whether one moves every few years or never moves at all. What does matter—and it is, I suppose, the modest lesson toward which I am heading—is that we all learn to understand ourselves as being "on the way." That understanding we may achieve without ever moving from one town to another, although my experience suggests that the actual moving is a powerful reminder of more ultimate truths. Still, I am prepared to grant that the experience upon which I reflect is a penultimate one, that it makes no ultimate difference whether one shares it or not. But this does not mean, to paraphrase Helmut Thielicke, that in the dark night of sin all cats are gray. Our task is to hold—in life more than in theory—the sense that everything penultimate matters morally while at the same time recognizing that what finally matters is the ultimate judgment of God upon our person. At any rate, such a simultaneous affirmation remains my aim here.

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I

I continue to be surprised by the fact that I actually moved. So routinized a creature am I that it seems an almost unbelievably daring thing for me to have done. There are still moments when I catch myself almost supposing that I am on leave and will soon be returning to Oberlin, and there are days when I cannot account at all for the decision. This is one point on which I am pretty certain that not everyone's experience would be the same. It is probably a good thing that not all of us are quite so routinized, so ready to say, as C. S. Lewis once did, "I like monotony." But all of us do and must lead lives that are embedded in particular places, and that fact is worth our reflection.

When contemplating the possibility of this move, I thought about many concerns that are rather obvious. What effect would it have on my children? Was it really all right with my wife, or was she only saying what she thought I might want to hear? Could I afford it financially? Could I, after so many years at Oberlin, really function successfully at a quite different sort of institution? Did I have the energy and the desire to accustom myself to new colleagues, a different set of problems, and new ways of doing things? Could I bring myself to move away from the Cleveland airport, so wonderfully accessible to me, and from the Cleveland Indians, at last a good ball club? Did I want to leave the several Lutheran congrega-

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tions in the area to which I had become quite close over the years? Did I know people who had moved after so long in one place and for whom the move seemed to be a happy one? Might it be better just to buy my burial plot in Oberlin and leave well enough alone?

What I did not think about, however, and what I now think myself naive to have passed over so quickly, was simply whether I was up to it physically and emotionally—whether, that is, I could uproot and reembed myself. I recall that when my father-in-law asked me whether I didn't think I was going to miss living in Oberlin, I quickly said that I didn't think that would be a problem.

I now realize that I had forgotten one little matter—what we call the doctrine of creation. Wholly apart even from any work-related questions, over eighteen years one carves out a life in a place. Except in the most extreme of circumstances, I suspect that it doesn't even particularly matter whether that place is generally perceived as desirable. It becomes home, the place where one is located. One walks certain routes, enjoys certain trees, recognizes certain people. We have doctors and dentists, grocery stores and shopping malls, baseball fields and banks, churches and schools. All become deeply embedded in a pattern of life. As Dr. Johnson is supposed to have claimed to refute Berkeley's idealism by kicking a stone which turned out to have its matter quite securely in place, so moving after eighteen years is a refutation of any supposition that our self is not in good part a body located in space and time.

Who, for example, would be constantly struck by how big a town Valparaiso is except someone who had spent the last eighteen years in a town of eight thousand, walking from his office to bank or post office whenever he felt like it? Why are there so few mailboxes to drop mail into on corners in this town? Why so few streetlights in our neighborhood? What shall we make of all those train whistles at night? What kind of university—however proud it may be of its recent appearance in the NCAA basketball tournament—would have no squash courts? I guess after all these years I could try to learn racquetball, but how shall I sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

This relates to what some theologians have been getting at in recent years when they have emphasized the categories of story and narrative. The self is always on the way and is not available to us abstracted from the story of one's life—which story is not yet complete. Only God, as St. Augustine said, can catch the heart and hold it still. Only God can see us whole and entire, as we truly are. Hence, we cannot in any complete sense account for ourselves or our decisions, even as I noted that I am often baffled when I try to account for my decision to move. To take the embedded nature of our life seriously is to realize that the story of that life must be precisely what St. Augustine wrote—a *confession* that God knows us better than we know ourselves. We are characters in a story of which we are not the author, caught up in a present moment that is always, in Stephen Crites' felicitous phrase, a "tensed present." Caught between memory of the past and expectation of the future, embedded in a present moment, unable to say in any complete sense who we are, we exist within the tensions of this pilgrim existence.

By disturbing the ground of our life, moving seems to rake up all those tensions. It discloses human life as it has been created by God. It is a finite and bodily life, tied to particular times and places. To give ourselves to no one and no place in particular is not to be more like God; it is just to fail as a human being. We are in large measure the conversations we have had, the games we have played, the books we have read, the work we have done. But we are not only that, for we are also on the way. As spirits made to rest in God, made to live in expectation, we transcend every particular location, and we must learn to live within that tension.

Theologically, I know what I think about all this. I think that even had I stayed in Oberlin until they lowered me into that burial plot, I would have needed to learn to think of myself as "on the way." God ties our hearts to particular times, places, and people—and then the same God tears us away from them so that we may learn to love him with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. And God does it so that we may learn to see this world—with all its beauty—in the way C. S. Lewis once described: It is an inn, a resting place, but we should not mistake it for home. God does it to help us learn that an "otherworldly" Christianity is the only kind that gives deep meaning to this life, that we dare not rest the whole weight of the heart's longing in any finite good.

That is, I say, my theological position on the matter. But one's gut doesn't always follow one's theology immediately or straightforwardly. Thus, before we moved, I went to a piano recital for the seventeenth consecutive year in Oberlin, listened to some pieces I have heard many times over the years, and found it terribly sad that the routine should be coming to an end. I went to my daughter's graduation from Oberlin High School—a ceremony not unlike the graduations of her older brother and sister. I have never liked those ceremonies. They are rather raucous affairs with little of the dignity that a ritualized occasion needs. And yet, I was saddened to be leaving at the end, saddened in part to think that the graduation of our one remaining child would be in a different place. There is, I know, something here of the "my country right or wrong" attitude, and I am prepared to defend it. An embedded life is simply that—not the most desirable life, but one's own. One's own, however, we must hasten to add, because we have been given it and placed there by the Creator toward whom we must make our way. If something

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within us rebels against being on the way, that is not all bad. For we are both on the way *and* located. Placed here by God and made one day to rest in God. Neither truth about our nature should be denied.

II

To move—especially from a house with a big attic—is to find oneself buried under the accumulation of the years. Four children whom we have taught to love books and who now own far too many books—as does their father. Countless things we have saved over the years for ourselves or our children. Many other things we have kept because we thought "we might need them some time" and wouldn't be able to afford to get them again. Here again, people's experiences may be irreducibly different. Perhaps the truly affluent simply know that if they need something again in the future they can just buy it. Perhaps, paradoxically enough, their affluence permits them to sit a little looser with their possessions. They are perhaps less likely to be buried under the weight of the years. But even they must surely have things they save not because they must but because they want to. And those possessions pile up over the years.

Perhaps for all of us there are some possessions that we can hardly do without. Moving made clear to me that our family simply has too many books. We weeded out hundreds. A few we sold. Some I gave to colleagues. Hundreds we donated to the Oberlin Public Library. They can practically hold a book sale with just what we gave them. No doubt, of course, there are many more we could have disposed of, but how wrenching must the experience of moving be?

The most striking thing to me, however, is not the number of books. I recall the last couple weeks before we moved. By then the books were packed, and we wandered around the house like lost sheep with no books to read. We were busy, of course, but, even so, one looks for time to read. I just can't seem to get along without a few books around. Neither, I noted, could my daughters. They wanted to go one last time to the "Bookseller" and look at used paperbacks. It struck me as a crazy idea, given the moaning I'd been doing about all the boxes of books. But we went—and, of course, each of them bought a few cheap paperbacks to read during the move.

I have found myself wondering, in fact, what I will do if the day comes when I can't read. How will I fill the hours? Surely, among those many mansions in our Father's house there must be some lined with bookshelves and appointed with old, comfortable chairs where I can read my favorite authors for whom life now so seldom leaves time—John Tunis, Felix Salten, C. S. Lewis, L. M. Montgomery. It's hard to imagine a heaven without their books.

Presumably an embedded life need not be a possessive life. The two, although closely related, are slightly different. I have defended embeddedness. Shall I also defend a certain possessiveness? Is there something wrong, or, at least, questionable, about all these possessions? I do not, of course, feel about all my possessions as I do about my books. In the course of moving—of buying a new home and trying to sell an old one—I found myself wondering why owning a home has never meant much to me. Perhaps it has something to do with having grown up in a parsonage. Perhaps it is because I am not (to put it mildly) very handy and cannot take joy in fixing things around the house. But more generally, I simply find property to be a burden—a black hole into which one pours time, energy, and money. I feel the same way about automobiles: necessary, to be sure, but always causing trouble. Not so, however, with things like books and baseball cards. There the possessive tie goes a little deeper.

When we think about possessions, we can hardly help recalling that the Bible, depicting God's people as on the way, often raises questions about our desire to locate ourselves, our desire to possess. Augustine says, in a famous passage, that Cain built a city, but Abel, being a sojourner, built none. Abraham leaves home because God calls him, and, as the Letter to the Hebrews puts it, he sojourns as a foreigner in the land of promise. The Israelites march for forty years in the desert without reaching the promised land. There is a strand of opinion in the Bible that prefers the tabernacle to the temple. It could, after all, be picked up and moved from place to place. And Jesus himself is worse off than the foxes and the birds, having nowhere to lay his head.

But we are not Jesus. We are not even called to be like Jesus, but only to follow him at a distance, and human beings need to "nest," to personalize space and make it home. In *Shantung Compound*, his memoir of life in a Japanese internment camp in Northern China in 1943, Langdon Gilkey reflects upon precisely this need. Within the compound the refugees found themselves in something like a state of nature, needing to organize their common life. In such conditions one notices what we usually take for granted. "The importance of space to the well-being, nay the existence, of a person came as a surprise to me," Gilkey writes. "Somehow each self needs a 'place' in order to be a self, in order to feel on a deep level that it really exists. We are, apparently, rootless beings at bottom. Unless we can establish roots somewhere in a place where we are at home, which we possess to ourselves and where our things are, we feel that we float, that we are barely there at all." Possessions are not simply contrary to our created nature.

At the same time, of course, we should not deny the rootlessness "at bottom" that Gilkey detects in our nature. As free spirits made for God, we are always strangers and pilgrims. If Jesus has nowhere to lay his head, and if he is, as Ephesians puts it, the image of mature humanity, can a truly human life need

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such personalized space? I think so, as long as we understand this need rightly. If we are on the way, we are on the way to somewhere—to a place we can call home. For now we may—either from necessity or duty—have to make do without the "home" our heart desires. But even the sparrow finds a home and the swallow a nest for herself; hence, the psalmist concludes, our soul should long to be home in the courts of the Lord. Every home we take possession of along the way is at least an intimation of that greater home we cannot make—cannot make because the new Jerusalem comes down from above and is not of our making. We may sometimes love these intimations too much, but we cannot be entirely wrong in wanting them. As Dr. Johnson said in what I cannot help reading as a double entendre capturing the duality of our nature, "To be happy at home is the end of all human endeavor."

It is quite true that there is always danger in possessions—that where our treasure is, our heart will be also. Of course, many of our possessions are things that no one else would want, so it's hardly a matter of piling up things that would be treasures for anyone else. They are just *our* treasures. But no doubt we often love them too much, and no doubt they sometimes enslave us. In becoming part of the story of our life, part of us, our possessions may take possession of us. And so, it cannot be altogether bad to divest ourselves of some, even if it hurts. That hurt is a reminder that we are still on the way.

I spent a good bit of the Fourth of July last summer up in the attic packing boxes and reflecting upon our relation to possessions. One can, of course, have the moving company pack everything, but how would they do it? Some of these things need to be sifted and sorted. Much of what we keep is, as I noted, only *our* treasure. Boxes of old school papers, programs, and awards for each of the children. Cards the children have made for us at Christmas or Easter. Autographed baseball scorecards. Old newspapers. Favorite toys of each child. Stuffed animals they took to bed when they were little. What is to be done with it all on the Fourth of July?

When in doubt I usually said "pitch it," and Judy, my wife—wiser as usual—said "keep it." In the long run she is right. All these papers, ribbons, and records are the things that tie us to our past. They remind us that we are not the independent, autonomous beings our world celebrates. We have been formed and shaped by others, to whom we owe a great deal, and gratitude is the appropriate response.

In many of the subjects central to my own professional work the concept of autonomy has been very important. Patients want control over their dying. Women want control of their bodies, even when those bodies carry a newly conceived child. Indeed, men and women generally want control of their reproductive powers. We want to control our environment, to have a sense of mastery. Who can entirely argue with such desires? Human beings are not just puppets, and they should have at least some control over the course of their lives. But a few hours spent packing in my attic suggests the need for caution here. Where we will put all this stuff in our new home that lacks an attic is anyone's guess, but Judy is right: We need to carry a good bit of it with us.

Still, up there in the attic I would often try one more tactic. We are taking this box of stuff, I would say, only so that ten or twenty years from now the children will have to go through it and themselves pitch it after we're dead. And no doubt they will pitch a good bit of it, either because they want to or because they must. But they will have to go through it first. They will have to be reminded that they are not like Hobbes' picture of men as mushrooms, springing out of the earth without any engagements or attachments. And in being thus reminded, they will perhaps see that their independence is, at best, relative. A good lesson for parents to teach their children.

III

To move after having been a long time in one place means inevitable loneliness. Others may welcome you and seek to ease the transition, but they have their own lives to live—moving along contentedly in familiar paths, as you were only weeks before—and nothing but time can heal the wound. Moving reminds one of the fragility of life. If we fall ill, we no longer have the doctors upon whom we had learned to rely. If our automobile falls ill, we no longer have the trusted mechanic whose counsel we had sought for years. Before moving we had life well under control—or, perhaps better in light of the point toward which I am heading, we *seemed* to have it under control. Now we are uprooted.

The ultimate truth of life might, of course, be that we are nothing but "rootless beings at bottom." One can build a philosophy upon such a vision. Thus, for example, Thomas Hobbes, living in chaotic and dangerous times, pictured human beings as "on the way," but hardly in the Augustinian sense that I used above. For Augustine the goal of this sojourn is to rest in God, and that is true felicity. For Hobbes the goal is simply to outdistance others along the way. In the race course of life

> To consider them behind, is glory
> To consider them before, is humility
> To be in breath, hope
> To be weary, despair
> To endeavor to overtake the next, emulation
> To lose ground by little hindrances, pusillanimity
> To fall on the sudden, is disposition to weep
> To see another fall, is disposition to laugh
> Continually to be outgone, is misery

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Continually to outgo the next before, is felicity
And to forsake the course, is to die.

Here is a sobering vision of life, although, of course, a possibly true one. Moving makes one take Hobbes seriously and invites us to consider what life must be like if there is—as Hobbes thought—no "*summum bonum*, greatest good, as is spoken of in the books of the old moral philosophers." Then, indeed, happiness must be what Hobbes says it is: "Felicity is a continual progress of the desire, from one object to another; the attaining of the former, being still but the way to the latter." This "restless desire," Hobbes says, "ceaseth only in death."

If this is a true vision of life, the only reason to move is to get ahead, to pass a competitor on the race course of life. And I would not deny that there is something to this. If we run well, we may manage for long stretches of time to forget the vulnerability that "grounds"—if that can possibly be the right word here—our mad dash to the end of the course. But I think that, for those of us who believe Augustine closer than Hobbes to the truth, the point is not to forget our vulnerability but to be reminded of it. Moving has a way of accomplishing that.

I have always been a good sleeper, but I have found something that can keep me awake at night: two mortgage payments. As I write these lines—though, I devoutly hope, not for much longer—we have not sold our home in Oberlin. Two mortgages plus a bridge loan can evoke a sense of vulnerability in one and make Hobbes' picture of the race course, in which to be weary is to despair, seem all too accurate. It is hard for the ordinary person not to lose a little sleep or to avoid feeling vulnerable when he—in company with the banks, of course—owns two homes. I dislike this in myself. Indeed, I have read and pondered several times Jesus' words about trust and anxiety in Luke 12. If by being anxious I cannot add a cubit to my stature, why should I worry more than the lilies of the field? But the theologian's occupational hazard is that he must think about such advice. No doubt, to the degree that I am simply worrying about the uncertainties of my own future, I am failing to trust God as I should. No doubt I need to learn day after day to say with the psalmist, "In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for thou alone, O Lord, makest me dwell in safety."

All this I grant and, at least in my better moments, am prepared to admit my failings here. But, of course, a decision to move affects others as well. It is one thing for me—if I could—to take no thought for my own morrow. It is quite another for me to take no thought for the morrow of my children. I am not persuaded that anything in Luke 12 suggests that a little anxiety about their future is not proper for me, even granting that one must always give one's children over, finally, to God's keeping. God, after all, wills to care for them in considerable part through me, and to make myself vulnerable is to make them vulnerable as well.

Here again, however, it seems impossible to know oneself fully. I find that I cannot sort out the good from the bad here. Perhaps I fail my children to some extent by making a financial sacrifice to move. Perhaps, on the other hand, if my vocational reasons are sound, I help them to learn that there are also other things that count in life. What cannot be denied, however—or, at any rate, what I cannot deny—is that moving brings one up short and evokes a sense of the vulnerability of human life. It reminds us that although the "abundant life"—modern evangelical jargon for that *summum bonum* in which Hobbes did not believe—may lie at the end of our way, God makes no promise that it always feels good to be on the way.

If moving is this hard, I find myself thinking, what would it be like if Judy were to die? I have been with a number of people in such circumstances. They generally seem able to carry on, even with difficulty, but one never quite knows how they manage. Clearly, staying put without her would be infinitely harder than moving with her—and that has seemed hard enough. Yet, of course, if we are both truly on the way, such a day must come for one of us. Not to live toward such pain would mean that our lives now were impoverished. Human beings cannot have the richness of love without setting themselves up for the most enormous rupture we can imagine some time in the future. As Joy Davidman says in *Shadowlands*: "The pain then is part of the pleasure now. That's the deal."

C. S. Lewis, in one of his early attempts at poetry, spoke of the "tether and pang of the particular" that is the source of our vulnerability.

Passing to-day by a cottage, I shed tears
When I remembered how once I had dwelled
there
With my mortal friends who are dead. Years
Little had healed the wound that was laid bare.

Out, little spear that stabs, I, fool, believed
I had outgrown the local, unique sting,
I had transmuted away (I was deceived)
Into love universal the lov'd thing.

But Thou, Lord, surely knewest Thine own
plan
When the angelic indifferences with no bar
Universally loved but Thou gav'st man
The tether and pang of the particular;

Which, like a chemic drop, infinitesimal,
Plashed into pure water, changing the whole,
Embodies and embitters and turns all
Spirit's sweet water to astringent soul.

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That we, though small, may quiver with fire's same
Substantial form as Thou—nor reflect merely,
As lunar angel, back to thee, cold flame.
Gods we are, Thou has said: and we pay dearly.

It turns out, then, the deepest vulnerability lies not in holding two mortgages but simply in our shared human condition. We are not angels who, because their life is not an embedded one, do not experience "the local, unique sting" and can easily love universally. The God who, while loving universally, loves each person individually has something more than that in mind for us—that, having experienced vulnerability, we may one day "quiver with fire's same substantial form" as God himself. That, Josef Pieper once noted, is what we really ask when we pray, "Kindle in us the fire of thy love." Moving reminds one just what it is that we ask in such a prayer, and we ought not do it casually.

IV

Where in these reflections is the sense of renewal—the challenge and stimulation of undertaking something new? A reasonable question, to which I now turn under the heading of vocation. In the second stanza of his well known hymn, "Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go," Charles Wesley expressed succinctly that concept of vocation:

The task thy wisdom has assigned
Oh, let me cheerfully fulfill,
In all my works thy presence find,
And prove thy acceptable will.

We in the West owe this sense of a calling in large part to the Protestant Reformers, even though we have distorted their ideas a good bit by now. The powerful sense that there exists work that we are called to do in the world, work that is ours and no one else's, work that will serve the needs of others whether it pleases and fulfills us or not—all this is built into the idea of vocation. It brings joy in the midst of our labor, but we should not suppose that such joy is simply a smiley face that suppresses the uncertainty and vulnerability of being "on the way." Calvin, I think, had it about right in the *Institutes* when he wrote: "Each man will bear and swallow the discomforts, vexations, weariness, and anxieties in his way of life, when he has been persuaded that the burden was laid upon him by God."

The large and largely unanswerable question, of course, especially when one is contemplating moving, is how we may discern what task God's wisdom has assigned us. At least for those whose lives are as routinized as my own, the force of inertia must be very strong indeed. Why move? Why assume God wants me somewhere other than where I happen to be? Indeed, the one passage in the New Testament from which Luther drew his understanding of the calling, a few verses in 1 Corinthians 7, is notably ambiguous on just this question. Translators must decide whether verse 21 is to be rendered: "Were you a slave when called? Never mind. But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity." Or whether it is better rendered: "Were you a slave when called? Never mind. But if you can gain your freedom, make use of your present condition instead." Two translations that lead in quite different directions when one asks what God desires of us in the calling.

The idea that we will feel the leading of God if only we seek it seriously is one I admit to doubting. I am more drawn, in fact, to the language Paul Ramsey once used in telling me that only twice in his life had he faced vocational decisions that he had "to put his will to." We must consider our talents and aptitudes, our likes and dislikes, the needs we are suited to serve—and then "put our will to" vocational decision.

When one moves there are, of course, always reasons for leaving as well as reasons for coming. For the most part I am here largely uninterested in the reasons for leaving. Indeed, I have to say that Oberlin College generously supported my work over the years, and I suspect that I might not have been as productive elsewhere. Moreover, it gave me for many years the privilege of membership in a department of religion that was always intellectually aggressive and never facile. Yet, I have found it increasingly difficult simply to believe in liberal education, despite the little talks about it that I have given to my advisees over the past couple decades. So often it does not seem to open the mind and heart to what counts most in life. This lack has, in my view, almost nothing to do with the idea of core curricula and almost everything to do with the fragmentation of our culture and the identity politics that dominates so much of academic life. Moreover, the one identity that seems to lack a place in the academy is religious identity. It becomes hard to recommend such a setting to young people and disconcerting to think of having given one's most productive years to an undertaking one is reluctant to recommend.

St. Augustine makes the point perhaps a little too strongly but still effectively in his *Confessions*:

> And what good did it do me that I, at a time when I was the vile slave of evil desires, read and understood for myself every book that I could lay my hands on which dealt with what are called the liberal arts? I enjoyed these books and did not know the source of whatever in them was true and certain. For I had my back to the light and my face to the things on which the light shone; so the eyes in my face saw things in the light, but on my face itself no light fell.

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That light, in truth, is what gives center and cohesion to our study, what makes the liberal arts what they once meant: study that set one free from what is merely necessary or obligatory, free, ultimately, to rest in God—to worship.

Although he might not wish to take credit for its results in my life, Richard John Neuhaus indirectly persuaded me of this in a conversation we had about his decision to become a Roman Catholic. He saw little future for Lutheranism in this country, and I feared—and often fear—he may be right. I noted to him, however, that this makes relatively little difference in my life. I am, for better or worse, pretty much formed by now. If the church dissatisfies me, as it often does, I can muddle along, serving it where I can, ignoring it when I must. His response was to the point: That may be fine for me, but will it work for my children? And, of course, he was on target. He meant that without institutions committed to a way of life—and without people interested in sustaining those institutions—we cannot transmit a valued way of life. We could, of course, follow Father Neuhaus to Rome, where they are still willing to run the risks involved in institutional commitment, and that would not be the worst of the choices open to us. A few decades from now it may be the best. But, although it may again be nothing more than that force of inertia in my life, I am not quite ready to give up on Lutheranism. Hence, Valparaiso University, with its historic Lutheran ties. I am, of course, acutely aware that it may disappoint me. That too is part of the vulnerability we incur in making important decisions, and it is part of life in one's calling, which is always personal, always one's own and no one else's.

"We can never foresee the results of our acts," Einar Billing wrote in his classic work *Our Calling*, "least of all when the goal is the kingdom of God. To maintain that our feeble deeds do serve this infinite goal is and remains a matter of faith." If we understand Billing rightly, we must, of course, appreciate the irony here, and it returns me to where I began. For had I remained at Oberlin I could have said exactly the same: that we can never foresee the results of our acts, and that we can only trust that our feeble deeds serve the goal of God's kingdom. Move or stay—there is a crucial sense in which it makes no difference, for in either case one is "on the way."

The great temptation, of course, is then to suppose that what is not of ultimate significance makes no penultimate difference. I have tried to avoid that temptation, tried to reflect upon what it means to be on the move, tried to let the experience remind me of truths too easily forgotten in the rush of life. I have, borrowing and modifying a Wordsworthian description of poetry, tried to recollect emotion in (theological) tranquillity. It should be evident, however, that neither the calling nor theological reflection upon it provides much tranquillity, for they situate us "on the way." There is, however, another, more important kind of tranquillity to be found even along the way, and for that I must give the last word to Billing when he writes: "According to Lutheran teaching [of the calling], the joy over the forgiveness of sins is the only joy we should seek." FT

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Humanism After Tillich

Max L. Stackhouse

The most creative dimensions of Western spirituality are rooted in a deep interaction between the biblically informed understanding of God, creation, and time and a humanist view of the true, the good, and the beautiful. Although tensions were sometimes acute, the affinities are many, and the interaction generated the deepest inner architecture of our civilization—philosophical theology, theological ethics, and religiously shaped aesthetics. In these we find the roots of classical doctrines, the grand syntheses of the High Middle Ages, the reconstructive syntheses of the Reformers, the sources of inspiration for the classical arts, and the assumptions, often hidden, of the Enlightenment. In these we find *intellectus* as the proper partner of *pietas*, and theology as the indispensable ground and guide for the humanities. Humanity cannot be understood without reference to God; and neither God nor God's revelation can be understood except through the lens of thought and experience. That conviction shaped not only the great Catholic and Protestant traditions, but everything that Paul Tillich did as perhaps the greatest of the twentieth-century "liberal" theologians.

When James Luther Adams translated a collection of Paul Tillich's articles just after World War II for a book called *The Protestant Era*, however, the heritage of biblical religion and that of humanism had begun to break their connection. The fracture had allowed a fanatical neo-paganism to threaten the world. These were forces with which Tillich had wrestled, politically and personally, for twenty years. He wondered whether the Protestantism that had simultaneously nurtured him and cramped him with its narrowness bore some responsibility for the unleashing of these barbaric religious impulses. Yet they had been defeated by the residues of a combination of prophetic faith and profound humanism.

In the wake of the victory over the Nazis, only some recognized how fragile the synthesis of theology and culture, of faith and reason, was. Tillich knew that religion could turn in on itself and become merely dogmatic heteronomy, and he knew that cultures could generate autonomous idolatries that defaced humanity. Thus, he also knew that certain religious convictions and careful human cultivation had to be held together. If humans are made in the image of God, we must not only know something of the self's image, but also something of the source and norm that makes it real.

Tillich explored this issue by showing how various features of the culture revealed the graced or the broken or even the demonic possibilities of existence. But since he was convinced that many of the traditional terms had lost their power to persuade, he spent much of his energy seeking to find contemporary, humanistic ways of articulating the perennial and immediately pertinent features of the theological message for this century.

This is one of the reasons Tillich was such a good preacher. He addressed the particular context of understanding of the day. Sadly, this also makes him difficult to teach today, for we have to teach the students the linguistic and philosophical conventions of his generation in order to show how Tillich used those concepts to treat the decisive questions. How ironic that the language by which he contextualized his message turned out to be a barrier between him and subsequent contexts.

But his questions stand, and one of them is the question of whether we are at the end of the Protestant Era. He knew that modernity was rooted in reformed Christianity as it allied with humanism, and he wondered whether, beyond the threat posed by Hitler, it was able to meet the subtler threats posed

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by Marx and Nietzsche, to which many confessing churches were oblivious. I now believe that his treatment of Marx was confused; but he had remarkable clarity about Nietzsche. He knew that the death of at least the cultural image of God was coming, and that this was the greater challenge than the one posed by Marx.

To be sure, he did not think that we would see the end of "the Protestant principle," for at the heart of Protestantism was a permanently valid and universally significant insight: no human manipulation of the symbols of any religion can bring grace to life, and every human representation of the divine is subject to the temptations of idolatry. This is the principle that allows religion to understand itself as under judgment, and to offer prophetic criticism against every moral and spiritual pretense by political, social, cultural, economic, and intellectual authorities. This is the principle that also makes us aware of the temptations to self-deception within, the futility of trying to justify ourselves by being more and more righteous, and the hopelessness of trying to overcome doubt by simply believing harder. Tillich knew that we can only find relief from these by the acceptance of grace through faith, by letting trust break through our suspicions and our demands for assurance.

Tillich knew also that this permanently valid principle had become thin in much contemporary Protestantism, and he called for a new alliance with "Catholic substance," a renewed appropriation of a sense of creation, sacrament, and celebration, dimensions of an embedded humanism more fully embraced by the Catholic tradition than by its severe Protestant counterparts.

It is not clear, however, that he adequately noted what is the theme of my argument here—namely, that to aid its cause, Protestantism, even when it tried to rely on Scripture alone, had always allied in large measure with humanist movements that were also opposed to hierarchical forms of life and thought. We can hardly speak of the Reformation without recognizing its interaction with what we call the Renaissance, with its effusive love of the vitalities of human imagination and, for that matter, with "the Reception"—the introduction of the universalist, cosmopolitan theories of justice and law into northern Europe.

As many have argued, these developments formed the second great social philosophy in the West, a new synthesis after the medieval one that appeared among the Rhineland, Dutch, Swiss, and Scottish reformers in Europe and began to exercise influence from Scandinavia and Hungary to Oxford and Paris. And in this country, the heirs of these movements—the liberals in the tradition of Locke and the Puritans in the tradition of the Protestant reformers—recombined in a fresh way.

That combination has been sorely tested in the last century, and it is a question whether it today has the capacity to shape the new global society emerging around us, or to answer the internal questions of meaning and purpose that perplex many in our postmodern world. On the external side, to be sure, there are many developments for which we must be grateful. Democracy is more widespread than ever before in spite of a number of tragic trouble spots. And, in spite of economic disruption in many locales, the middle class is expanding on a worldwide scale. Further, many of the great perils of our century are in decline. Not only was Nazism defeated, and not only did communism collapse, the nuclear peril has been reduced, and the Cold War, with its constant tendency to escalate every petty conflict into an apocalypse, is but an echo. Instead of the violent nationalisms that engulfed this planet in the most destructive wars of human history, we have the internationalization of communication, trade, medical research, and education. In some ways, our prayers have been answered. What terrorized our parents no longer frightens our children.

Of course, every Protestant also knows about sin. We should have no illusions about the fact that the potential for wickedness has not yet been defeated. Paul tells us that even after the Resurrection, when the powers of destruction are bound, they writhe in their bonds seeking to loose their terrors on the world again. Everyone who struggles with a bad habit and every statesman who has negotiated a cease-fire knows this to be true. And if the monitors of the ecosphere, of urban crises, and of resurgent racism are correct, we shall have to confess our continued complicity even as we rejoice at other moral gains.

The more difficult question is whether we shall have the resources to confess our sins and to face the newer problems half so well as did those who went before us. And this goes to the question of the internal threat. The problem is that we are not certain that the syntheses that formed our moral rootage can hold, for a great split has developed in the inner logic of the West's moral life. We can see it in many pulpits, seminaries, and divinity schools, as well as in the universities, the media, and professional schools. We have become essentially humanistic, and humanism is deconstructing itself.

What began as a marriage of humanism and religious conviction has cooled into a distant speaking acquaintance, marked by increased distrust and suspicion. Humanism became preoccupied with its own capacity to recreate itself according to its own image, and theology pretended to be entirely self-sufficient, in no need of humanism's resources or critique. Disengaged from its anchor in the past alliances and its partnership with faith, humanism took up, seriatim, with utilitarianism, empiricism, historicism, positivism, existentialism, psychoanalysis, pragmatism, materialism, phenomenology, and a

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host of exotic religions (so long as they were not Jewish or Christian and had no distinct notion of God). It later joined a covey of social theories—Marxism, Darwinism, Systems Analysis, and Gestalt. In all, it denied the need for and the viability of theology.

It cannot be said that this is entirely the fault of philosophy or the humanities. Theology flirted with all these "isms" as well, and no small number of theologians were eagerly seduced. Further, in reaction against these liaisons, prophetic voices began to condemn the alliance of theology and humanistic philosophies of all kinds. Some did so because various strands of theology had become identified with the ideologies of this or that segment of humanity—with a nation or a race or a class or a gender.

More troubling was withdrawal from the prophetic responsibility. Theology became the privileged discourse of believers huddled under the steeple: us against the world. There has always been a sectarian impulse in Christianity, for believers know that God is not the world and the church is not the same as the culture; and distinctions have to be drawn. But when the lines of distinction are made too sharp, doubts arise as to whether the grace of God can manifest itself in any of our social arrangements. One sees this tendency not only in the emergence of various types of fundamentalism, but even, in far more elegant form, in the thought of the greatest dogmatic theologian of our century, Karl Barth.

The divorce between humanism and theology has been traced to various sources: Machiavelli's advice that religion, rightly manipulated, is a wonderful tool of state; Melanchthon's adjustments of Luther; Arminius' revising of Calvin; Descartes' turn from Catholic doctrine to the subjective self; Hume's skepticism about all moral or religious knowledge; Schleiermacher's focus on the sense of absolute dependence as the core of religion; Feuerbach's claim, echoed by Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche, that all theories of God are a projection of human needs and wants onto the heavens.

Whenever the split began, we have been living with it for some time, and the problem is that the former greatest allies of faith now appear to be deconstructing humanity in ways that provide neither guidance for the common life nor compelling interpretations of the inner life. Waving the banner of postmodernism, contemporary thought has decentered the human subject, insisting that the human person is but a social construct. The individual, in this view, is not a soul, a mind, a psyche, or a will—and is certainly not made in the image of God. Any residual ontology that implies a "real" self able to choose and reason, love and judge, needs to be abandoned. We are to recognize instead that individuals are but random collections of virtual states of consciousness, with no underlying ground, no principle of unity, and no predetermined boundaries.

Some suggest that these developments are but another in the passing fads of academic humanism, and that there is little to worry about. But if one understands the humanities as expressions of the deepest assumptions of a civilization at any historical moment, and as the precursors of the conventional wisdom of the next generation, there is much to fear.

It is ironic that the two streams of theological thought that have most separated themselves from humanism have most energetically embraced this deconstructive humanism. Those who embrace the anticultural impulses of sectarian fundamentalism delight in this deconstruction, for it proves that all these humanist theories, worldviews, and philosophies were artificial constructions anyway, figments generated out of human pretense. Comforted by this debunking, they can cling unchallenged to their prejudices.

Those who embrace a second impulse, one often dependent on Barth, are more subtle. They are seldom fundamentalist or premodernist, although they derive their views from one way of understanding the classic dogmatic tradition. They see in the postmodern deconstruction of humanism a valid insight that, they say, the heirs of Nietzsche almost have right. The self is not the rational or stable entity that the earlier humanists tried to tell us it was. This is not because it is nothing or simply an ensemble of contingent social forces, but because it gets caught up in the fancies of the world or its own fantasies and must be recentered by Christ.

This is a powerful position and it commends itself to theologians who want to bring Christ to the people and the people to an informed faith. Tillich, Niebuhr, and many other contemporaries would endorse this view, although they might not use the same terms to express it. But what this view does not do is reengage the common life and reconnect the recentered self to the arts and the humanities and to social reconstruction. Nor does it reengage the life of the mind to help theology reconstruct those parts of academia caught in the current carnival of deconstruction.

We have to ask whether we are at the end not just of the Protestant era, but of the humanist era. Our current autonomous humanism cannot rightly shape souls or societies. It has no enduring depth, no capacity to grasp who we are or to guide us as to what we ought to be about.

There are a number of possible Christian responses to this situation. One is simply to turn elsewhere, to abandon the alliance of humanism and Protestantism as hopeless, or to see Protestantism as but the prelude to humanism. But there may be another, more ecumenical approach. The challenges of our times, the noted priest and scholar Brian Hehir recently claimed, require the recognition that

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modern civilization is undergoing a great change. The nation-state developed through a long history, marked by the end of the so-called "Wars of Religion" in Europe when the Peace of Westphalia was signed in 1648. That is not only where the nation-state came to domination in politics, but also where religion became officially subordinate to political agendas, undercutting the dream of a universal humanity tied to a universally valid faith. Father Hehir suggested that however vague references to a "new world order" seem, there may be emerging some new universalism—and he thinks the Catholic tradition, linking natural law with revelation, has the "substance" to guide it. We may be again at a "Catholic Moment," as Richard John Neuhaus has suggested.

The evangelical scholar Mark Noll takes a different approach. He opposes the triumphalism of today's advocates of crusading Christianity and calls them to make manifest the difference personal faith in Jesus Christ makes in public policy and intellectual life. He wants a leaven of "Cross-centeredness" to manifest itself in a compassionate, sacrificial submitting of our lives to the service of God and neighbor. Noll and others seem part of an "Evangelical Moment" occuring, as Michael Cromartie has pointed out, simultaneously with the Catholic moment.

Three things, I think, are going on. First, the nation-state is declining, as Fr. Hehir says, precisely because a new global society is rising in our very midst. Technology, communication, transnational corporations, and both financial and labor markets have ranges of operations that no longer coincide with national boundaries. And the tapes, videos, films, and CDs of the West are present in every corner of the world and partly produced for a world market. For those whose religious identity is tied to national or cultural identity, the changes are a threat to faith. We must thus ask the *Catholic* question: What kind of faith and morals ought to be universal?

Second, certain issues of common life seem to require personal rather than organizational responses. Not all the issues eroding civil society can be dealt with by political economy—the divorce or abortion rates, the aimlessness of young people, the personal feelings of failure, inadequacy, and defeat. At this intimate and personal level, the primary moral supports are doubtful and must be rebuilt on new grounds. We must thus also ask the *Evangelical* question: What authentic personal transformations or conversions are required of us?

Third, we must recognize that we have not thought at both these levels for some time. For some time it has simply been assumed by many of the most moral, educated, and dedicated people in our century that knowledge could and should be gained, that society could and should be organized, that governments should and could be constituted, that personal human relationships should and could be conducted, and that private meaning should and could be founded on the basis of analytical reason, discerned interests, and voluntary agreements—with no need of God and theology. We have, in short, been living in a humanist era that coasted on a social and moral capital derived from the humanities' old relation to theology.

Warren Nord begins his book *Religion and American Education* by recounting the story of E. F. Schumacher's visit to Leningrad during the days of the USSR. Schumacher found himself, in confusion, standing near several huge churches that he could not find on his tourist map. When he asked his interpreter, he was told that the maps did not show churches. Yet, he noted, at other places on the map, grand old churches were shown. "But those," said the interpreter, "are museums." "We show museums." Schumacher wrote that it was not the first time he had been given a map that failed to show what he could see in front of his eyes. And Nord goes on to draw the implications of this for our situation: It is a striking fact that American students can earn their diplomas and advanced degrees without ever confronting religion except as a museum piece. Can the studiously anti-theological humanism in which students are trained sustain them over time? Can it grasp the realities we see around us? Can it guide the professions that will guide our future?

In this connection, we are just beginning to see the implications of the fall of communism. It was not only the fall of Stalinist centralization, or Leninist power analysis, or Engel's historical materialism, or even Marx's world-historical dialectics. It was the collapse of the entire set of humanist presuppositions that humanity can live without God, that civilization can exist without religion, that humanism can exist without theology.

We do not grasp the significance of the shift if we do not discern the crisis of humanism as identified by Catholics and Evangelicals. If humanism is not connected to a theology, all hell is likely to break out in our souls and our global society. Left to itself, humanism deconstructs—not only theology and ethics, but also the self, and leaves us with the permission to deconstruct our neighbors.

If I sound a bit like the old-time preacher who would take you to the very brink of hell and then slip you God when you are not looking, you are not far from wrong. I do not believe that an autonomous humanism is or can be the final word; I want a humanism able to temper religion's own temptations, one able also to help flesh out its greatest and indispensable gifts.

I have been deeply impressed by Daniel Elazar's work on the history of the idea of Covenant. In the two published volumes, he shows how this distinctive biblical idea gave stability and focus to possibilities already present in a number of cultural traditions, generating

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concepts of constitutional democracy and genuine commonwealth. In the two volumes yet to come, he promises to treat the prospects for a federated pluralism that embraces humankind. These Hebraic ideas show an affinity for Catholic ideas of subsidiarity and Protestant notions of the pluralistic "spheres" of society.

I see a number of signs that give me hope. I recently joined a promising group of Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant scholars to work on the problem of human rights. In contemporary art, I sense something Tillich would surely have loved—a reaffirmation of cosmic moral order, a rediscovery of permanence and reliable structure in the midst of a chaos that only appears to be real on the surface of things. And even in the technological, corporate world, where Tillich and most of his friends and heirs would have looked only with suspicion, a new sense of responsibility and new discoveries of commonality are taking place daily. There is ecumenical hope in this direction.

What appears in these developments is an alternative postmodernism. The possibility emerges that there are "universal absolutes" after all, built into the fabric of creation. Although they are broken and distorted in many ways which we delight in noting when we do not want to be held accountable to them, they are discoverable by theological reflection that is in accord with ancient as well as contemporary knowledge, and they invite mutuality and participation.

We live more in continuity with the past than in the discontinuity implied by the moderns (who claimed to break with the "mythological" past of religion). We are in partial harmony with the postmoderns, but we are in discontinuity with that kind of hypermodernism that sees no point in studying the past and in opposition to the premodernism that holds that everything has been going downhill for centuries.

But above all, we seem to be reaching a fresh appreciation of transcendence: we live in an order we did not create, but which we must acknowledge if we are morally honest. It can be more clearly grasped when we see our own and our neighbor's humanity under and within the care of God. In this sense, we are reaching the end of the humanist era that pretended to be autonomous and issuing a call to seek again for a theonomous humanism. For that, we need a new generation of faithful thinkers, humanistically engaged to advance what Tillich attempted. FT

Matthew 3:7-12

This brood of vipers, fleeing from the coming fall,
are torn between the need they own, and the fee
they charge to get there. They wear their gifts for all
to see, these would-be limbs on Abraham's tree.
The ax still takes its toll, to any pardoner's roots.
The winnowing fork is working His hands, He clears
the threshing floor. No man of words, His shoots
produce or else they burn in the fires they hear.
But see! Their own feet betray them; their coming is praise
enough! Good Mercy who paints in such broad strokes,
whose music moves these icy spheres, these brazen
barristers, have on us, cover our sins with your cloak.
Though Mercy contains it, Justice can walk alone.
We go in twos and survive Him, stone on stone.

David Craig

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Values, Virtues, and John Paul II

Thomas D. Williams

Few words can rival "values" for popular appeal in the 1990s. Heightened awareness of the link between cultural problems and moral irresponsibility has spawned a nearly universal condemnation of the "war on values" being waged in American society. Politicians of every stripe and persuasion call for a return to traditional and family values as the surest solution to the nation's woes, from crime and drug abuse to poverty and illiteracy. There is, undoubtedly, a good deal of hype in this push for values. In the current cultural environment values sell, and those with a nose for success are quick to jump on the values bandwagon in the hope of reaping personal benefit. Yet along with this self-interested fringe of values vendors there exists a solid center of genuinely concerned Americans who have seen the bottom fall out of the public moral conscience in little more than a generation. This "solid center" constitutes the real reason for the popularity of values, which suggests that the issue will remain in the public eye for some time.

In the midst of this values boom, however, there is a growing trend among cultural conservatives to adopt a different tack in efforts to reestablish a sense of ethical responsibility in American society. According to this group, a necessary ingredient to end the "war on values" is precisely a war on the word itself. "Values," we are told in a bevy of recent books and articles, is an inherently vitiated term which itself embodies a relativistic ethic. The promotion of "values" to combat pervading moral relativism would thus propagate the problem its users seek to destroy.

This criticism often takes the form of a contrast between virtues and values, with the latter being the modern emasculated equivalent of the former. Gertrude Himmelfarb, in *The De-Moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values* (1995), states that "it was not until the present century that morality became so thoroughly relativized that virtues ceased to be 'virtues' and became 'values.'" The change in vocabulary itself constitutes a revolution in thought. "'Values' brought with it the assumptions that all moral ideas are subjective and relative, that they are mere customs and conventions, that they have a purely instrumental, utilitarian purpose, and that they are peculiar to specific individuals and societies."

Professor Himmelfarb's analysis echoes that of the late Allan Bloom, who popularized the problem of values with his 1987 work, *The Closing of the American Mind.* Bloom traces the origin of values to Friedrich Nietzsche, who preached the supremacy of the human will and its ability to create good and evil. Nietzsche, and Max Weber after him, sought to substitute subjective values for objective goods. For Nietzsche, writes Bloom, "we do not love a thing because it is good, it is good because we love it." Rebelling against centuries of moral reasoning, Nietzsche proclaimed that goodness is not something objective that attracts the human will, but rather the creative will's projection of value on something else. Thus values are anchored not in objective reality, but in the subjective will. As Nietzsche understood it, Bloom continues, "men in our current decrepitude could take it easy if they believed God, nature, or history provides values."

As the disastrous consequences of our pervasive ethical relativism become more and more apparent, there is evidence of a growing frustration with values whose only claim to validity is personal preference and taste. Yet the road to recovery is still uncertain. In the face of the present crisis it seems there are two possible paths to take in our approach to values: either to abandon discourse on values in favor of more traditional ethical language, or to assert the

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objective foundation of values and hence a system by which they can be compared, evaluated, and judged.

The consensus seems to favor the abolition of "values." Nevertheless, a convincing argument can also be made for the second option. While discussion on virtues indeed must be vigorously reintroduced into the public forum, it doesn't necessarily follow that virtues must be promoted to the exclusion of values—as we can see if we examine the approach that Pope John Paul II has taken towards values.

Allan Bloom is thoroughgoing in his analysis of Nietzsche's philosophy of values, but the practical conclusion he draws is fatally flawed. The proposal to jettison "values" from philosophical and ethical lexicon reflects an erroneous understanding of the nature and role of words. All words run the risk of being manipulated, but they can also be redeemed. In culture wars, as in philosophical debate, words are often like towns along the battle front: they offer a strategic position and must be fought for and defended, and not relinquished as soon as the enemy advances. Along with "values," Bloom stigmatizes such words as "authenticity," "commitment," and "decision," all of which have thoroughly legitimate and worthwhile uses. These terms need to be rehabilitated and purified, not discarded—else every word claimed by a philosophical or psychological school would have to be declared unsuitable for meaningful discourse. By this logic we could no longer speak of freedom after Sartre, of tolerance after Voltaire, or of social justice after liberation theology.

Though Bloom brought to the fore suspicions about "values" terminology, doubts had been raised decades before the appearance of *The Closing of the American Mind*. In 1953 the philosopher Leo Strauss published *Natural Right and History*, in which he ably demonstrates the incoherence of Max Weber's fact-value distinction. Ten years later Strauss lamented the relativism ushered in by the social sciences and their methods in a paper on the behavioral sciences. This "new political or social science," says Strauss, rests on "sociological or psychological theories" that exclude an objective base. "By teaching the equality of all values, by denying that there are things which are intrinsically high and others which are intrinsically low as well as by denying that there is an essential difference between men and brutes, it unwittingly contributes to the victory of the gutter."

Strauss' analysis was remarkably accurate. Already in 1962 he correctly predicted where modern sociology was headed, and in his prognosis of the "victory of the gutter" as a consequence of moral relativism, he couldn't have been more exact. But one key difference between Strauss' position and Bloom's is that Strauss lays the blame for moral decline on "teaching the equality of all values," where Bloom stresses the corruptive effect of the term itself.

The moral relativism of the 1960s was exacerbated by the publication of *Values Clarification* in 1972 and the educational movement it engendered. The book by Sidney Simon, Leland Howe, and Howard Kirschenbaum, which has sold over 900,000 copies, is a veritable manual of relativistic ethics. Although acceptance of the program has waned in the last several years, its principles still hold sway in educational circles. As Paul Vitz has observed, "The name 'values clarification' is gone—but the same self-oriented moral relativism, under other names, continues to undermine the moral life of our children." The problem, in other words, goes deeper than the choice of terms: a virtue can be relativized just as easily as a value.

One might object that, in fact, modern society already understands "values" according to a relativistic model—especially since the birth of the values clarification movement—in a way it has not yet relativized "virtues." Yet we owe this understanding to the deliberate action of individuals who have energetically promoted their views on values, and not to an inherent problem with values themselves. And despite the efforts of these individuals, many still equate values with objective goods. This suggests that a proper response to the current situation is an equally energetic campaign for a more serious and objectively grounded understanding of values.

One might also object that we simply have no need for "values," since the word is fully replaceable by less ambiguous and more forceful synonyms, such as "virtues." But the two words are not synonyms. Virtue refers to a good habit, a habitual disposition of the will towards goodness. Value, on the other hand, is a quality of things that makes them desirable. Though values and virtues often intersect, values cannot be reduced to moral virtues. Values extend beyond moral virtues and comprise all goods for the person: biological, human, moral, and spiritual, according to a hierarchy rooted in human nature.

In his discourses and written messages Pope John Paul II often refers to values, as a single issue of the weekly Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* reveals. On January 25, 1996, the Pope addressed the mayor of Rome and made reference to the "great values of hospitality, tolerance, justice, and universality." On January 27, in a meeting with the regional board and council of Lazio, Italy, he urged his hearers to "adhere to the loftiest values of its tradition." On January 28, in a homily in the Roman parish of Pope St. Cletus, he stressed the need to deepen "the human and Christian values present in one's own life," and to order them "according to a proper hierarchy." On January 29, he spoke to the Brazilian bishops of "the fundamental values of respect for life and the family."

In *The De-Moralization of Society*, Gertrude Himmelfarb says that Nietzsche used "values" "consciously, repeatedly, indeed insistently" to bring about his

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purpose. The same could be applied to John Paul, though his purpose is radically at odds with that of the German philosopher. Pope John Paul does not leave his understanding of values open to misinterpretation. In his many addresses and writings he takes care to define exactly what he means by values, specifying their relationship to unchanging and objective truth. In the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, the Pope expressed this relationship within the framework of the common good: "It is urgently necessary, for the future of society and the development of a sound democracy, to rediscover those essential and innate human and moral values which flow from the very truth of the human being and express and safeguard the dignity of the person: values which no individual, no majority, and no State can ever create, modify, or destroy, but must only acknowledge, respect, and promote."

Besides specifying the relation of human and moral values to the truth of the human person, John Paul also makes clear that in the final analysis, values are grounded in God Himself. In March 1985 the Pope wrote a letter to young people in which he stated, "Only God is the ultimate basis of all values; only He gives the definitive meaning to our human existence." He added that "in Him and Him alone all values have their first source and final completion.... Without Him—without the reference to God—the whole world of created values remains as it were suspended in an absolute vacuum."

Along with allusions to values throughout John Paul's writings, we find the term in other magisterial documents as well. Nowhere is this more evident than in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which contains numerous references to values, especially in the context of marriage, the family, and Christian social doctrine. In the chapter on the human community, for example, we read: "Society is essential to the fulfillment of the human vocation. To attain this aim, respect must be accorded to the just hierarchy of values, which subordinates physical and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones."

Those who feel uncomfortable with John Paul's use of "values" have done their best to minimize or nullify its importance. Some have denied the fact outright, such as the Catholic League's well-intentioned ad in the October 2, 1995 edition of the *New York Times*, which stated that "they speak about values, you speak about virtues." While John Paul does speak abundantly about virtues, to say he doesn't speak of values is patently untrue.

Others have accused the Pope of superficiality, of not thinking through the consequences of what he is saying. This is apparent in Allan Bloom's remark: "After Hitler, everybody scurried back under the protective cover of morality, but practically no one turned to serious thought about good and evil. Otherwise our President, or the Pope, for that matter, would not be talking about values." But the insinuation that John Paul does not engage in "serious thought about good and evil" falls by its own weight. It is difficult, if not impossible, to come up with anyone who thinks more seriously about these topics than the present pontiff. His vigorous and cogent apology for the objectivity of the moral law has set the tone for Catholic moral theology for the close of this millennium and the birth of the next.

Others have seen in the Pope's continuous use of "values" an inadvertence, a mere oversight to which no weight should be given. Thus the term slips into his addresses and writings without his realizing it, as could any other word, and he doesn't really know what he is saying. The frequency of John Paul's references to values, however, renders this thesis improbable. Long before becoming pope, Karol Wojtyla wrote his doctoral thesis on Max Scheler's *Ethics of Values*. In his classic work, *The Acting Person*, Wojtyla examines the cognitive experience of values, which he equates with the apprehension of the good of a specific object, and the relation between knowledge of values and the will. Pope John Paul is indeed a philosopher *of values*. If he insists on speaking of values, it is clear that he does so deliberately, with a most precise meaning in mind.

A still more novel explanation for the Pope's use of "values" has been offered by Iain T. Benson of British Columbia, head of the Centre for Renewal in Public Policy (See "Against Values" in *First Things*, January 1996). According to Benson's theory, which succeeds in safeguarding John Paul's moral and philosophical credibility while maintaining the undesirability of "values," the Pope's apparent use of the word "values" is nothing more than an error in translation. Whereas the Latin speaks of "goods" (*bona*)—for example in the encyclicals *Veritatis Splendor* and *Evangelium Vitae*—the English translation yields "values."

Unfortunately this hypothesis doesn't take into account the genesis of Pope John Paul's encyclicals. In drafting his encyclicals, the Pope first produces copious notes in Polish. These are subsequently translated into Italian and the Italian draft becomes his *instrumentum laboris*, to be worked on together with a team of experts. The approved Italian text is finally translated into many other languages, including Latin. The Latin is, therefore, the *official* version, but not the *original* version. Where the English reads "values" we find *"wartości"* in the Polish edition (not *dobra*, goods) and *"valori"* in the Italian. The problem, then, is not the translation from Latin to English, but the translation from Italian to Latin.

To understand John Paul's attitude toward values—and toward modern culture in general, with its concrete concerns and characteristic preoccupations—it is necessary to understand the Pope's view of the human person and the Church's pressing

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task of the new evangelization.

Vatican II's *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,* a document the Pope helped write, offers a description of the Catholic attitude towards the modern world as one of solidarity with the whole human family. The Council speaks of the Church's responsibility to read the signs of the times and interpret them in the light of the gospel. "In language intelligible to every generation," we read, "she should be able to answer the ever-recurring questions which men ask about the meaning of this present life and of the life to come, and how one is related to the other."

John Paul's style of preaching the gospel to contemporary society is indeed anything but defensive and is succinctly captured in his well-known saying, "Proclaim the truth and let error destroy itself." Keenly aware of his role as guardian of the deposit of faith, the Pope is unabashedly "countercultural" when faithfulness to Christ requires it, but he does not look for confrontation as a matter of course. In Baltimore on October 8, 1995, Pope John Paul touched on this point in his homily: "Sometimes, witnessing to Christ will mean drawing out of a culture the full meaning of its noblest intentions, a fullness that is revealed in Christ. At other times, witnessing to Christ means challenging that culture, especially when the truth about the human person is under assault."

John Paul's approach does not compromise with "modernity," but is rather a modern yet unapologetic expression of the perennial teachings of the Church. James Hitchcock of St. Louis University writes, "The Pope has . . . committed the Church to a relationship with culture which is both modern and traditional in the best sense of each term." All this means, naturally, that our secular society finds John Paul disconcerting. It keeps running into walls in its attempt to make him fit into preestablished molds. The same difficulty is no doubt experienced by those Catholics accustomed to conceiving the Church and her ministers in terms of political categories: left, right, and center.

Debate on just how far to go in her dialogue with the world has been present in the Church since her foundation. Though of far smaller scale and import, the war on "values" is reminiscent of the heated dispute between the great apologists during the first centuries over Greek "inculturation." Some, such as Tertullian, Tatian, and Arnobius, were passionately opposed to Greek philosophy and culture in the fear that their influence would adulterate the gospel. Others, however, such as Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria, endeavored to articulate the message of the gospel using Hellenistic terminology and philosophical concepts. By so doing they sought to facilitate the Greeks' acceptance and assimilation of Christianity, and the spread of Christianity itself. Fortunately Justin and Clement won out in the controversy, and the "baptism" of Greek philosophy enriched both philosophy and Christian expression as well. Similar disputes continue up to the present day. During the Second Vatican Council, for example, there was resistence to using the word "dignity" in the conciliar document on religious liberty, on the grounds that it smacked of secular humanism.

Time and time again Pope John Paul II has demonstrated his evangelical prudence. In his dialogue with the modern world he has maintained a careful balance between firmness and flexibility. His advancement of values—together with virtues—is in keeping with his larger program: the promotion of the integral good of the human person, culminating in salvation through the gospel.

"Democracy stands or falls with the truths and values which it embodies and promotes." These words formed the core of John Paul's address given at the farewell ceremony of October 8, 1995, which officially closed his visit to the United States. The Pope added, "But these values themselves must have an objective content. Otherwise they correspond only to the power of the majority, or the wishes of the most vocal." We ought to insist on this vital link between values and objective content. It is time to end the war on values, not by laying down our arms or abandoning the battlefield, but rather by fearlessly proclaiming and living out the truth. FT

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Same-Sex Marriage: As Hawaii Goes . . .

David Orgon Coolidge

"Whatever your view of same-sex marriage," declared Andrew Sullivan in *The New Republic*, "in all likelihood, within a year, some same-sex couples will be legally married in America." In the *Washington Post*, Jonathan Yardley echoed the point: "Same-sex marriage, however the majority may feel about it, is beginning to have the look of an idea whose time has come."

The occasion for these comments was the announcement in Honolulu last December of a trial court decision in *Baehr v. Miike* (originally entitled *Baehr v. Lewin*). First launched by three same-sex couples in 1990, the case was the subject of a dramatic 1993 opinion by a divided Hawaii State Supreme Court, which ordered a full trial in a lower court. After three years of delay, that trial was finally held, and on December 3, 1996, Judge Kevin Chang ruled that the refusal of the State of Hawaii to grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples violated the Hawaii State Constitution, and that the state had failed to demonstrate a "compelling state interest" that could justify this "discrimination." Judge Chang has delayed ordering the state to issue same-sex marriage licenses until the Supreme Court hears the state's appeal.

Of course, the issue of same-sex marriage is not settled in Hawaii. While convincing the Supreme Court to overturn the lower court is an uphill battle, the people of Hawaii have other options for resolving the issue that would simply bypass the court. Efforts are underway to amend the Hawaii Constitution, both through the legislature and by attempting to convene a constitutional convention.

Though Judge Chang's decision in the *Baehr* case makes same-sex marriage more likely to succeed in the Hawaii courts, it may also make it more likely to lose in the long run. The people of Hawaii have begun to realize that they cannot count on their courts to defend their own laws. Despite overwhelming public rejection, the state Supreme Court is poised to force the legal recognition of same-sex marriages, unless it is stopped by the citizens themselves. Sullivan is absolutely right, from the court's point of view, when he speaks of the arrival of same-sex marriage "whatever your view," just as Yardley is right to dismiss "however the majority may feel about it." And yet, as people realize that they have been excluded from their own law-making process, the momentum to pass an amendment grows steadily stronger.

Some have argued that the case in Hawaii is the result of an orchestrated legal campaign. Yet when *Baehr* began in 1990, the issue of same-sex marriage was nowhere to be found. The homosexual community had debated the desirability of same-sex marriage in the 1950s, and from the 1960s on, gay and lesbian litigators had launched repeated attempts to legalize same-sex marriage in a variety of state and federal courts. But all of these efforts had been unsuccessful. When the Supreme Court's 1986 decision in *Bowers v. Hardwick* upheld the right of the states to criminalize sodomy, national gay rights organizations dropped whatever little interest they had in the issue, and focused mostly at the state level on repealing sodomy laws and passing statutes affirming rights based on "sexual orientation."

Between 1990 and 1995, however, seventy-five law-review articles on same-sex marriage appeared, seventy-two of them by pro-gay law students and scholars (sixty-nine supporting same-sex marriage, three attacking marriage altogether). National gay and lesbian rights organizations became major forces in local, state, and national politics. The Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the National

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Lesbian and Gay Rights Project of the ACLU, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders built themselves into major public-interest law firms, whose combined budgets, according to the *Washington Blade*, now exceed $6 million per year.

The *Baehr* case, however, was launched by local activists without support from national gay-rights organizations. When even the local ACLU turned down the case, the plaintiffs hired Dan Foley, a former local ACLU staff attorney. Because the state constitution and Supreme Court were known to be more liberal than their federal counterparts, Foley framed the case entirely as a claim under Hawaii law, to make it immune from transfer or appeal to the federal courts. Foley got the local ACLU to file a legal memorandum in the case. At the initial court hearing in the fall of 1991, the local ACLU lawyer was allowed to speak in open court on behalf of the plaintiffs, a highly unusual step. Even so, trial judge Robert Klein—who now sits on the Supreme Court—dismissed the case, holding that no valid legal claim had been made. It appeared that the case was over, and the national organizations had been right.

When Judge Klein dismissed the case, however, he chose to address many of the substantive issues that had been raised by the plaintiffs and the local ACLU. This opened the door for the plaintiffs to appeal, on the grounds that no *formal* evidence had been taken on the issues. At this point the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund and the national ACLU offered support. The plaintiffs appealed Judge Klein's verdict directly to the state Supreme Court, on the grounds that denial of same-sex marriage violated the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Hawaii Constitution. Lambda and the ACLU filed amicus briefs, while a local lawyer filed the only amicus brief in favor of the existing law.

The case came before an odd assortment of judges in the fall of 1992: Chief Justice Ronald Moon, Associate Justice Steven Levinson, Associate Justice Yoshimi Hayashi (about to retire from the Court), and two substitute judges from the Intermediate Court of Appeals, James Burns and Walter Heen. During the oral argument, the Deputy Attorney General appeared taken aback by the questions from the bench. Isn't it obvious, one judge asked, that male-female couples can go to the Health Department and get licenses, whereas same-sex couples cannot? Isn't that discrimination, pure and simple?

Between October 1992 and May of 1993, the "Gay Moment" arrived in American politics. Bill Clinton became President, the gay and lesbian community got their "place at the table," and the "gays-in-the-military" debate began. During this same period, Associate Justice Levinson drafted the opinion for *Baehr*. The time was ripe, Levinson may have sensed, to strike a decisive blow for gay rights.

On May 5, 1993, Hawaii's Supreme Court announced its opinion that the marriage law was a form of "sex discrimination." The opinion was signed by only Levinson and Moon, with a partial concurrence by Judge Burns. Judge Heen dissented. (Justice Hayashi had since retired, but stated that had he still been on the Supreme Court, he would have joined Heen's dissent.) Even the plaintiffs were astonished. The national gay rights groups scrambled to respond, realizing that while they had an astonishing victory, it would be a challenge to keep it. Lambda launched the Marriage Project, the Freedom to Marry Coalition was born, and nationally coordinated efforts began to get sympathetic media coverage.

But what did the two justices actually decide? The published decision began with something that supporters of same-sex marriage and popular reports of the decision rarely mention: Contrary to the plaintiffs' first line of reasoning, there is in fact *no* fundamental right to same-sex marriage under the state constitution's Due Process clause. This was clear, the justices said, because calling same-sex unions "marriages" would stretch tradition-based Due Process analysis beyond recognition. The legal concept of marriage could not be extended to include homosexual couples without fundamentally altering its accepted meaning—a step they declared themselves unwilling to take.

The plaintiffs had argued in their second line of reasoning that under the Equal Protection clause the court should treat gays and lesbians as a protected class, striking down existing marriage law as a form of discrimination based upon sexual orientation. Not surprisingly, the court ignored this argument: Not only is the category of "sexual orientation" missing from the state constitution, but proposals to add it had been roundly defeated as recently as a 1978 constitutional convention.

Had the justices left their analysis at this point, the *Baehr* case would have joined the other failed attempts to litigate same-sex marriage. But Justice Levinson, the author of the Supreme Court's decision, was apparently eager to find grounds for overturning the lower court's ruling. To achieve this he constructed an ingenious argument—one that even the plaintiffs had never suggested. Though "sexual orientation" is not a classification requiring special protection, "sex" certainly is, mentioned in both the original state constitution of 1950 and a state Equal Rights Amendment added in 1972. Existing marriage law, he argued, should be treated as a "sexual classification" for Equal Protection purposes, and the burden of proof for justifying this "sex discrimination" should be shifted from the plaintiffs to the state. Since any discriminations that involve the classifications specifically mentioned in the Equal Protection clause require the courts to examine them with strictest scrutiny, the existing marriage law can be justified only by the demonstration of a *com-*

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pelling state interest (which is usually defined as empirically demonstrable harm of an extremely large and damaging character).

There is a specious plausibility to the decision, deriving from our typical association of sex with marriage: men and women marry, and marriage law concerns their relations precisely as men and women. And yet, the irony is that from this association the decision builds in three steps an argument for removing sex from the concept of marriage.

First, Levinson argues that marriage is a "state-created legal partnership" and that marriage has no meaning or nature outside the law. (The case law cited to substantiate this claim is meager and unpersuasive.) Second, he argues that because marriage involves a man and a woman, the marriage law that the state—and the state alone—has created is a law that "classifies by sex." (Here he ignores the fact that the sexual classifications traditionally scrutinized by courts involve only laws that treat members of one sex less favorably than members of the other.) Third and finally, Levinson argues that same-sex couples are discriminated against because they cannot obtain a marriage license, while male-female couples can. Thus we have at last uncovered the sexual discrimination in a marriage law that the state created for its own purposes and must now justify under the strictest scrutiny.

Simply as a piece of logical reasoning, the argument appears to make a glaring and unexplained switch from speaking of individuals to speaking of couples. But here the effect of speaking of marriage as a legal partnership comes into play: Levinson converts marriage into a matter of individual choice that allows him to speak of a man being "discriminated" against because he cannot choose to marry another man. When the state moved formally for a reconsideration of the decision, newly appointed Justice Paula Nakayama joined without comment Levinson and Moon in mandating strict scrutiny. The court then remanded the case to the trial court, setting into motion three years of constant delays by the state.

The attorneys for the state were in an extremely difficult position, and had roughly three options for approaching the trial remanded to Judge Chang's courtroom.

First, the state could challenge the premises of the Supreme Court's 1993 opinion head-on. This would involve arguing that the existing definition of marriage, adopted by the citizens of Hawaii, is entirely compatible with Due Process and Equal Protection, and that the plaintiffs were simply positing a different view of marriage under the guise of a "constitutional" challenge. This the plaintiffs were free to do, the state could have argued, but in the legislature—like all other citizens. This approach would have had the virtue of simplicity. But it would have required the state to defend the people's moral judgment, which it seemed reluctant to do.

Or the state could formally accept the "compelling state interest" test mandated by the Supreme Court, yet offer Judge Chang a way of defining the test to make it easier to uphold the law. It could show that "compelling state interests" also include those based on the moral judgment of the people, and then demonstrate that all "sexual classifications" are not equal. This could easily be done by drawing upon statutes, case law, and constitutional tradition from Hawaii itself.

Finally, the state had the option of accepting not only the test imposed upon it by the Supreme Court, but also accepting the assumptions behind that test: (1) marriage is a state-created entitlement, (2) individuals have an equal right to state benefits, and (3) access to those benefits can only be limited if concrete harm can be shown by properly credentialed social scientists. It could screen out all overt moral judgments and rely instead upon its scientific experts.

For a variety of reasons, the state chose to take the third route in the case it presented, attempting to show that empirically demonstrable harm would be done to children by legalizing same-sex marriage.

Almost from the beginning it was clear that the state was hesitant to defend its own law seriously. Governor Benjamin Cayetano, elected in the fall of 1994, had even at one point proposed removing the term "marriage" from the state's legal code, until gay and lesbian activists explained to him that this would sabotage their efforts. During the campaign, his running-mate, Lieutenant Governor Mazie Hirono, openly supported same-sex marriage. The Deputy Attorney General originally assigned to the case, Steven Michaels, was notoriously unenthusiastic about defending the law. He resigned and moved to the mainland the summer before the trial, leaving Deputy Attorney General Rick Eichor, a well-respected lawyer but one whose specialty is water rights, in charge of the case. The Attorney General appointed by the Governor, Margery Bronster, is generally thought to have political aspirations of her own and seemed unlikely to risk alienating the outspoken and influential supporters of same-sex marriage in local Democratic circles. She appeared in court on the first day, but otherwise left the conduct of the trial to her deputies.

To watch the trial, as I did, was a distressing experience, despite the well-intentioned efforts of Deputy Attorney General Eichor. Both the state and the plaintiffs produced their dueling social-scientific experts, but virtually all the passion was on one side—worsened by the fact that Eichor, a low-key lawyer originally from Kansas, gambled that a laid-back approach would win points with the judge. A state hesitant to make an openly moral argument found itself pitted against lawyers, including Lambda's top national litigator on marriage issues,

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ready to press their claims with all the passionate moral intensity of a children's crusade.

Of course, given the state Supreme Court's demand that the marriage law be judged under the strictest scrutiny, with a defense for the law succeeding only if it demonstrated a compelling state interest, the plaintiffs didn't have to work all that hard. All their lawyers had to do was to poke holes in the state's social-scientific arguments, and invoke the Supreme Court's test. "The trial is rigged against marriage," declared the Hawaii Catholic Conference. "The Hawaii Supreme Court has already found marriage guilty of sexual discrimination without any benefit of trial. The trial court's only job is to decide whether marriage should be granted a pardon. The state can only plead mercy."

Yet even given the conditions under which the state's lawyers had to work, and the weak "sociological" line of defense taken by the Deputy Attorney General, the trial went poorly. The attempt to talk solely about children backfired, forcing the state's lawyers to suggest that gays and lesbians were inadequate parents, even while the state's own social scientists were declaring otherwise on the witness stand. Consciously avoiding gay-bashing is one thing, but in this case, the state turned out to be its own worst enemy.

While eight groups filed amicus briefs in favor of same-sex marriage, five groups filed briefs in support of the existing marriage law and Judge Chang had available all the legal arguments the state had been unwilling or unable to make. A month and a half later, however, on December 3, the judge announced his decision in favor of same-sex marriage, as many had predicted he would. Ignoring the amicus briefs that bolstered the state's case, he cast himself in the role of neutral fact-finder—simply repeating the legal test given to him by the Hawaii Supreme Court; plodding through the witnesses' testimony, choosing what he liked and disparaging what he disliked; and castigating the state for having failed to provide him with sufficient evidence to uphold the law. He had no choice, he declared, except to declare the law unconstitutional and to order the state to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. He then delayed his order long enough for the state to appeal its decision to the Supreme Court, which will receive briefs in late spring and take up the appeal during the summer.

Those who support the traditional definition of marriage, both in Hawaii and on the mainland, are racing to head off a potentially disastrous decision by the Hawaii Supreme Court. In Hawaii, polls have consistently shown that over 70 percent of the citizens oppose the legalization of same-sex marriage, with the number creeping upward as debate has intensified. Those most likely to favor same-sex marriage are whites and recent arrivals to the islands, while those most likely to oppose it are Filipinos and native Hawaiians, with Japanese-Americans falling between. This local opposition has come as a surprise to same-sex marriage advocates on the mainland, who had expected Hawaii's pluralism and tradition of tolerance to work to their benefit.

What does lend itself to same-sex marriage, on the other hand, is the peculiar nature of party dynamics in state politics. Hawaii is virtually a one-party state, ruled by a pervasively liberal Democratic elite since 1954. Within the party, activists have the upper hand and are strongly supportive of the campaign for same-sex marriage. The newly elected Democratic Party Chair defeated a candidate who opposed legalizing same-sex marriage, and a leading gay activist was recently elected one of three Party Vice-Chairs. Hawaii's entire congressional delegation voted against the federal Defense of Marriage Act in September 1996 and was the only state delegation to receive a 100 percent rating from the gay and lesbian Human Rights Campaign. The state Civil Rights Commission openly supports same-sex marriage, as do leaders of the major labor unions and the editorial boards of both major daily newspapers.

The issue of same-sex marriage, however, has widened the gap between this dominant political liberalism and the general social attitudes of Hawaii's citizens. Led by the Roman Catholic, Latter-day Saint, and evangelical Protestant communities, many citizens have become mobilized for the first time in order to reaffirm the traditional definition of marriage—pushing through the state legislature in 1994 a law denouncing the Supreme Court's 1993 decision and reaffirming marriage as the union of one man and one woman. In response, however, first the legislature and then Governor Cayetano appointed (and stacked) two successive commissions to examine the issue, and in 1995 the second issued a lengthy majority report favoring same-sex marriage.

Around the same time, the supporters of traditional marriage solidified their organizational efforts into two major groups: Hawaii's Future Today, which is predominantly Catholics and Mormons, and the Alliance for Traditional Marriage, which is primarily evangelicals. Given that self-identified Christians make up less than half of Hawaii's population, while nearly three-quarters of state residents oppose same-sex marriage, it is clear that support for traditional marriage extends far beyond the Christian communities Andrew Sullivan derided as "fundamentalist." In 1996, largely as a result of the efforts of these groups, the state House of Representatives, by an over two-thirds margin, passed a constitutional amendment meant to preempt the Supreme Court's anticipated decision. But in the state Senate, where support for same-sex marriage was strongest, a domestic partnership bill passed instead (although it was stopped by the House), and a constitutional amendment failed by a 14-11 vote.

In the 1996 elections, the chairman of the Senate

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Judiciary Committee, who had led the fight against the amendment, was trounced by a newcomer who campaigned in support of traditional marriage. Other supporters of same-sex marriage also suffered defeat. Even the liberal Senate President, confronted by a political newcomer supportive of marriage laws, won only narrowly. But win he did, and he has appointed two Senators sympathetic to same-sex marriage as cochairs of the Judiciary Committee.

On January 24, early in the 1997 legislative session, Hawaii's Future Today and the Alliance for Traditional Marriage sponsored a rally in support of the existing marriage law. Over five thousand people pleaded with the legislature to pass an amendment. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Honolulu, Francis X. DiLorenzo, had a pastoral letter read from every pulpit in Hawaii in January: "Some of our state legislators, especially in the Senate, would rather not deal with the issue. They believe that either we don't care or that we are not enlightened enough. We, the citizens of Hawaii, must therefore make it absolutely clear to them that we want true marriage protected and supported." He concluded, "Unless we demonstrate courage and power now, another shameful page of Hawaii history may very well be written. I, for one, cannot remain silent."

That same week in January, the Hawaii House passed two bills: a constitutional amendment that would overrule *Baehr* and a "reciprocal beneficiaries" bill offering limited benefits for unmarried couples. Both passed by over a two-thirds margin. By early February, the Senate swung into action. It passed its own two bills: a constitutional amendment which purports to protect marriage, but which does not overrule the Supreme Court's interpretation of "sex," and an amended "reciprocal beneficiaries" bill dramatically expanding benefits for unmarried couples. As of mid-February, both bills were floating in conference committees.

The other option open to supporters of traditional marriage law is a constitutional convention. On the ballot in November was the question, presented to the voters every ten years, of whether to convene such a convention. The local political powers campaigned vigorously against it: even the League of Women Voters joined with the ACLU to argue that such issues as marriage were "too emotional" to be dealt with by the people. Their advice was rejected by a narrow margin of slightly over three thousand votes. The Hawaii State AFL-CIO has sued to block the result, however, claiming that the forty-five thousand blank ballots cast in the election should be counted as "No" votes. They have filed their suit directly with the same Supreme Court whose decision on same-sex marriage the convention would be likely to attempt to overturn. As of mid-February, there has been no decision by the court.

But even if the convention manages to meet, it will convene in 1998 at the earliest, and no amendment could go onto the ballot before the November 1998 general election. Meanwhile, the *Baehr* appeal is underway. Unless the Supreme Court withholds its opinion until after a convention, or the legislature—pressured by traditional-marriage advocates supported by help from the mainland—manages to pass an amendment, Hawaii is likely to have some same-sex couples legally married (probably irreversibly) before a constitutional convention can take action.

If that happens, same-sex couples from the mainland can fly to Hawaii to get married. When they return to their home states, some will file suits seeking to force recognition of their "marriages." It is these couples who offer the lever for Lambda's lawyers to move the issue into the federal courts, arguing that every state must recognize the marriages performed in Hawaii.

Responding to this threat, the legislatures of other states and the U.S. Congress have begun to move. Traditionally, the legal definition of marriage is up to each individual state, and if one state rejects a particular marriage as against its public policy, it need not recognize it when performed by another state. How this tradition will be applied if same-sex marriage is legalized is unclear. By the end of 1996, seventeen states had passed legislation stating that it was their public policy that marriage consists only of the union of one man and one woman. Colorado also passed a bill, but Governor Roy Romer—now the Chair of the Democratic National Committee—vetoed it. By mid-February 1997, twenty-six more states had begun tackling the question. Meanwhile, in 1996 Congress passed the Defense of Marriage Act, which established the traditional definition of marriage as the standard for federal law, and which permitted states, under the Full Faith and Credit Clause of the U.S. Constitution, to make up their own minds whether or not to recognize same-sex "marriages." President Clinton then signed the Act while in flight early one morning during the presidential campaign—"under the cover of darkness," according to his gay and lesbian supporters

Lambda, the ACLU, and their allies have vowed to attack every one of these laws in court. But according to the January 1997 *Wirthlin Report*, 67 percent of the American people do not believe marriage should be redefined, and the battle over the legal definition of marriage may yet become the occasion for a vigorous outbreak of democratic self-government. As the President recently reminded us, "Government is not the problem, and government is not the solution. We the American people, we are the solution." The people may carry the fight beyond the courts, amending constitutions as they go, for the majority of Americans are not anti-gay, but pro-marriage. Those who try to stop them have set their faces against both tolerance and pluralism. ☐

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Books In Review

The Styles of Modern Politics

THE POLITICS OF FAITH & THE POLITICS OF SCEPTICISM. By MICHAEL OAKESHOTT. Edited by Timothy Fuller. *Yale University Press. 139 pp. $25.*

Reviewed by **Peter Berkowitz**

IN HIS EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION, Timothy Fuller informs the reader that those who were best acquainted with Michael Oakeshott and his thought cannot explain why he did not see fit in his lifetime even to make known the existence of this manuscript, which Fuller has published under the title *The Politics of Faith & the Politics of Scepticism*. It is appropriate to raise the question of the extent to which this posthumously published book reflects Oakeshott's considered opinions, but there is no need to be long detained by it. Though it may have fallen short of Oakeshott's own standards, this small book illuminates, as do few recent publications, the fascinating and treacherous terrain of modern European political thought. Indeed, its deft and gracefully learned exposition puts to shame the steady stream of hot-off-the-press scholarship that has flooded the field of academic political theory. To read this unexpected new book by Oakeshott is to be reminded of the artistry of the intellect and the dignity of the human mind.

Michael Oakeshott, who was born in 1901, was appointed in 1950 to the Chair of Political Science at the London School of Economics. At the time of his death in 1990 he was revered by thoughtful conservatives in England as perhaps their leading philosophical spokesman. Yet Oakeshott's work is still not very well known in America, either among conservative intellectuals or among scholars of political theory.

This is regrettable but understandable. As a thinker, Oakeshott's first and overriding allegiance was neither to party nor school but to clarity of thought. He not only defies easy classification but devotes himself to exposing and criticizing the intellectual propensity to force the complexities of moral and political life into tidy conceptual categories. He was a political theorist who con-

PETER BERKOWITZ *teaches government at Harvard and is the author of* Nietzsche: The Ethics of an Immoralist. *His new book,* Virtue and the Making of Modern Liberalism, *is forthcoming from Princeton University Press.*

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stantly warned against the dangers of allowing theory to govern practice. In politics he was a trimmer, but not because he thought that the complexities of political life were incomprehensible. On the contrary, through a kind of theoretical inquiry—really an eclectic mix of conceptual analysis, history of ideas, and political history—he sought to show that a deep "ambiguity and ambivalence" were constitutive characteristics of our political life and therefore could not be removed but instead must be negotiated or navigated.

In *The Politics of Faith & the Politics of Scepticism* Oakeshott seeks to identify the sources of the ambiguity and ambivalence inhering in the fund of ideas we have inherited from modern European political thought about the proper task and scope of government. He argues that at the dawn of modernity, owing to the sudden and dramatic increase of power available for controlling nature and manipulating man, the question "What shall government do?" became fresh and urgent and open to distinctive answers. But the range of answers was not limitless and the variety was not devoid of pattern. Indeed, it is Oakeshott's contention that views about what government ought to do with its newfound ability to control and supervise swung between two charged poles or historical and theoretical extremes, "two opposed styles of politics."

At one extreme, the politics of faith affirms that the chief purpose of government is the perfection, or improvement of the material condition, of mankind. This purpose is accomplished by the imposition of a "comprehensive pattern of activity upon the community." In the quest to perfect mankind or to put it on the one right road to improvement, the politics of faith proclaims that government and not some other agency or agents must play the decisive role. This style of politics, according to Oakeshott, receives its classic exposition in the writings of Francis Bacon and is also manifest in seventeenth-century English puritan politics and the eighteenth-century projects of the *philosophes*.

It welcomes power, ineluctably seeks to expand the scope of government, prefers the common good to individual rights, and shows little patience for dissent or opposition. The "faith" in the politics of faith, it must be emphasized, is not faith in God (though it appears in religiously driven versions), but faith in the capacity of government to bring about the condition "preeminently proper to mankind" by the exercise of minute control over an ever increasing range of human activities.

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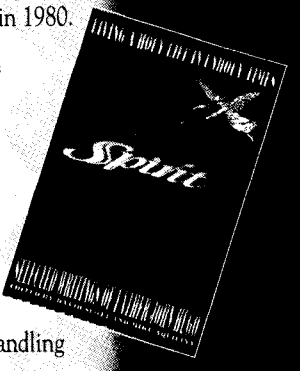

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AT THE OTHER EXTREME of modern political life lies the politics of scepticism. What the politics of faith enthusiastically embraces as grand opportunities for government to set things right, the politics of scepticism condemns as dangerous threats to human freedom and dignity. The politics of scepticism rejects the view that it is government's task to improve or perfect humanity, sometimes because the very idea of perfection is thought to be absurd, but predominantly on the grounds that government is far too blunt an instrument to use in the pursuit of something so complex and elusive as perfection.

Instead, the politics of scepticism views the preservation of public order as government's primary task. This style of politics Oakeshott finds animating the writings of Hobbes and Pascal, Hume and Montequieu, *The Federalist* and Burke. It is not against strong government but in favor of strength narrowly channeled in the pursuit of limited goals; it tends to respect precedent and the rule of law as means for maintaining order in an orderly fashion; and, for fear of what imperfect human beings may do with unchecked power, it is inclined to accept with equanimity the cost on the capacity of government to do even its limited business effectively that comes from institutionalized checks and balances. The "scepticism" in the politics of scepticism is not in the first place scepticism about God or morality, but doubt—sometimes driven by strong faith and high moral principle—about the capacity of government officials, human like the rest of us, to wield power efficiently and justly.

Oakeshott points out that modern politics has always been heterogeneous and complex in practice, and that the politics of faith and the politics of scepticism are equally extremes that never appear in pure form. But he is also at pains to point out that as styles of governing they have not proved to be equally influential or equally wise. The spirit animating the politics of faith breeds the pathology Oakeshott elsewhere diagnoses as rationalism in politics: the search, through the exercise of theoretical reason, for universal solutions to the problems of politics and the reduction of governing to the exercise of technique for the manipulation and regulation of human conduct. Our century has witnessed unspeakably virulent and savage strains of this disease in the totalitarian nightmares of fascism and communism.

But grasping that twentieth-century totalitarianism is a monstrous manifestation of the extreme represented by the politics of faith does not justify a headlong flight into the arms of the opposite extreme. While the politics of scepticism, in Oakeshott's view, has the better argument, the deeper insight into

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human nature, and the more urgent message for politics today, left to its own devices it reveals itself as partial and even self-defeating. For in its focus on formality as the means for maintaining public order, the politics of scepticism sinks into a rigid, passive, and impervious condition that prevents it from adapting to changing circumstances and unexpected events. And in its concentration on tempering and limiting government, the politics of scepticism sends an uninspiring message that works to deprive it of citizens' enthusiasm and allegiance.

In their pure form, both the politics of faith and the politics of scepticism are incomplete, unstable, and in need of a tendency or truth only the other can supply. The virtue of the politics of faith is an energy and enthusiasm in government that comes from viewing politics as the pursuit of a great cause. The virtue of the politics of scepticism is a forebearance in governing that is rooted in understanding that maintaining a basic public order is always "a great and difficult achievement never beyond the reach of decay and dissolution."

What is needed now, Oakeshott's analysis suggests, is a complex or mixed style of politics that somehow combines the virtues of the politics of faith and the politics of scepticism while avoiding their defects and extreme tendencies. Perhaps such a style of politics would involve energy, enthusiasm, and a high sense of purpose exercised in keeping government focused on the limited tasks it is best suited to achieve.

In its scepticism about principle and its faith in practice, Oakeshott's thought can resemble such fashionable contemporary schools of thought as postmodernism and pragmatism, but it must not be confused with either. For both postmodernism and pragmatism, contrary to their official tenets, exhibit a deep antipathy to the ambiguity and ambivalence in our political life that it was one of Oakeshott's abiding preoccupations to bring into focus. The postmodern mind reveals a virtually unshakable faith in its progress beyond the alleged narrowness and delusions of all previous thought. The pragmatist sees only the uses and none of the disadvantages of converting all questions about the good into questions about what works. Oakeshott's thinking—his impressive resistance of the powerful temptation (to which his thought is not altogether immune) to turn the distrust of doctrine into a doctrine—provides a bracing antidote to the false comforts conferred by postmodern and pragmatist pieties.

Commenting on Friedrich von Hayek's critique of socialism in *The Road to Serfdom*, Oakeshott memorably observed that "a plan to resist all planning may be better than its

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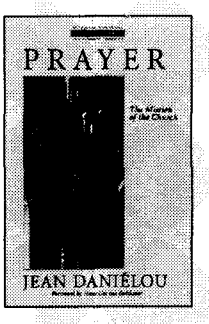

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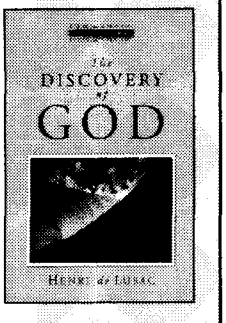

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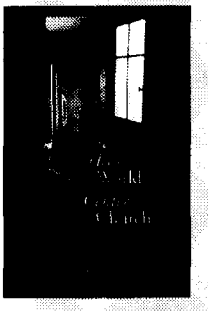

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opposite, but it belongs to the same style of politics." In the same spirit, it needs also to be noted that a principle to resist all principles may be better than its opposite, but it belongs to the same style of thinking about moral and political life. Pursuit of the intimations in our tradition points beyond tradition to the things intimated, and exploration of the ambiguities and ambivalences in our practice leads in the direction of the principles that underlie our politics. It is the encounter with complexities such as these that, in reading Oakeshott, gives one pause and pleasure, sparks the imagination, and excites the desire to understand.

Second Thoughts of a Secularist

WHY AMERICA NEEDS RELIGION: SECULAR MODERNITY AND ITS DISCONTENTS. By GUENTER LEWY. *Eerdmans. 160 pp. $18 paper.*

***Reviewed by* J. Budziszewski**

IN ITS SCANT 160 pages, this book has everything: riveting argument and thrilling mystery sandwiched between an incoherency and a paradox. Apparently nothing in its writing went according to plan. When he began his project the author was a proud secular humanist, a card-carrying moral relativist, and a subscriber to the view of reason that holds faith to be unreasonable. His design was to ridicule the writers who ridiculed his creeds and demolish their proposition that the real crisis of our age is a crisis of unbelief. Somewhere along the way he discovered that they were right after all. Partly right, anyway.

Though Professor Lewy still believes that there is no God, he now finds that he has more in common with religious than with secular thinkers. In particular, he no longer denies the existence of moral truths ("some" moral truths, he says), and he finds it necessary to speak not only of sin but even of redemption (though what meaning these concepts retain for him remains unclear). Moreover he declares that moral reasoning can only "inform" a conscience, not "create" one; for most people, its creation requires faith in God. Lewy envies his believing friends their moral resources. Lacking the model of the love of God, he says, many people in his own ranks love "humanity," but far fewer love "individual human beings with all their failings and shortcomings." They may do good works, but they are "not likely to produce a Dorothy Day or a Mother Teresa."

THE AUTHOR'S ARGUMENT, then, is simply that in order to sustain a decent moral order, America needs religion—traditional religion, which in our case means Christianity. Virtually the whole of Lewy's case is compressed into just two chapters: the third, on whether secular modernity has promoted the decline of the family and the rise of the underclass, and the fifth, on whether devout Christians are different from other people in terms of crime, prejudice, marital stability, and illegitimacy. Not that two chapters are too few; Lewy does a good job marshalling his evidence and anticipating his critics, and one hopes that fifty-two pages are adequate to document the obvious.

More striking, perhaps, is what the author does in the rest of the book. So many matters must be dealt with just to clear the ground. For instance, he wants to talk about "current realities," but because many people are more interested in drawing up a moral balance sheet on Christian history, he devotes a whole chapter to arguing that this sort of project is futile. He wants to talk about secular humanism, but because many people consider it the figment of a demonizing Christian imagination, he devotes another chapter to putting it in perspective and discussing the various ways in which it does or does not influence

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our culture and institutions. And he wants to commend religion, but because many people still hold to the deterministic fiction that a secular society is the inevitable wave of the future, he devotes still another chapter to bringing them up to date. The book would be well worth reading if for no other reason than the elegance of its architecture.

Besides an argument, however, Lewy has an incoherency, a paradox, and a mystery. The incoherency lies in the author's previous doctrine. Now conversion is always interesting, and partial conversion no less interesting than complete. What is particularly arresting about *this* partial conversion is that it was not by recognizing his incoherency that the author escaped from it. In the beginning, explains Lewy, he was a noncognitivist. Noncognitivism is the view of ethics which denies that moral statements have truth values, so that "I ought to love my neighbor" is neither a true nor a false utterance. In those days Lewy also approved of the emphasis of some philosophers on the language of morals, because it seemed "the way to move forward toward a sounder and more rational morality." But there is the incoherency, for plainly, if moral statements are neither true nor false, then no morality is sounder or more rational than any other. It seems that the part of Lewy that denied the rationality of moral judgment was at war with the part of Lewy that insisted upon it. Even though Lewy himself never noticed the war, somehow, in the course of his study of culture, the moral and rational side won.

If the incoherency lies in the author's previous doctrine, the paradox lies in his present one. Lewy, who now calls himself a nontheistic rather than a secular humanist, proposes cooperation between Christians and nontheistic humanists against the common secular foe. Not once, but twice, he quotes from the document "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" (published in First Things, May 1994): "To propose that securing civil virtue is the purpose of religion is blasphemous. To deny that securing civil virtue is a benefit of religion is blindness." "Morality," he says, "needs all the help it can get." Well, that's right, and all real help is welcome. One does not wish to be churlish. But perhaps one may be forgiven a gentle curiosity as to who is helping whom.

Even on Lewy's account, there is a cavity at the heart of nontheistic humanism that only revealed religion can provide. While he insists that a few individuals manage to be good without belief in God, he just as insistently denies that a whole culture can do so. The reason turns out to be that even these few are living on borrowed scruples. Although nonbelievers can *recognize* such truths as the sanctity of life (so that in that sense these truths are self-evident), they are unlikely to *discover* them (so that in that sense they are not self-evident at all).

In all its types, then, humanism would seem to depend for its very life on religious traditions that it does not and cannot supply. Secular humanism is the parasitic variant that harms its religious host; nontheistic humanism is at best the commensalistic variant that tries to do no harm. Now none of this proves that the Christian revelation is true, and if I were to have the privilege of a leisurely lunch with Professor Lewy I would hope to ask how it is that what he calls myth can find admitted moral truths that what he calls enlightenment cannot. That, it seems, is the mystery.

I highly recommend the author's delightful book. But the one I am really waiting for is his next.

Augustine Revisited

Love and Saint Augustine. By Hannah Arendt. Edited and with an Interpretive Essay by Joanna Vecchiarelli Scott and Judith Chelius Stark. *University of Chicago Press. 233 pp. $22.50.*

***Reviewed by* George McKenna**

I first met Hannah Arendt in 1964, while I was writing my dissertation

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on her political thought. I called her up and asked if I could interview her, and she invited me to her apartment on Riverside Drive. She was fifty-eight, a year younger than I am now, which seemed old at the time. I was twenty-seven.

I was stiff with fear as I rang the bell. I was afraid of her formidable erudition, her stately prose, and of the scratchy, masculine voice I heard on the phone—a voice that sounded as though its owner had limited patience with fools. ("You had trouble reaching me, Mr. McKenna? Did you try the Manhattan phone book?") These fears turned out to be unfounded. She took my coat, poured me a drink, and cut up pieces of an apple. We talked for an hour or so, and when I left I felt like dancing.

Hannah Arendt was old enough to be my mother in 1964. Now, thanks to the labors of Joanna Vecchiarelli Scott and Judith Chelius Stark, we have the publication in English of a work Arendt wrote in 1929, when she was younger than my daughter. The youthfulness of the author of *Love and Saint Augustine*, a partially rewritten version of her Ph.D. dissertation, must be kept in mind when weighing its importance. In a wide-ranging essay at the end of the book, Scott and Stark argue that it is a seminal work, a key to understanding virtually all of her subsequent writings. The truth, however, is almost the reverse: her later work actually influenced *it*, or at least a large piece of it.

HOW COULD AN earlier work be influenced by a later work? Here is what happened. Not long after publishing the dissertation Arendt was caught up in the maelstrom of European history: she fled Nazi Germany in 1933, worked in France resettling Jews in Palestine, got married, divorced, remarried, and slipped out of France just as the Vichy regime took over. In her luggage when she arrived in New York in 1941 was a battered copy of the dissertation, but there is no evidence that she had given it much thought during those years. In 1965 she mentioned in a letter to Mary McCarthy that she hadn't "read the thing for nearly forty years."

Not until 1958 does Augustine start reappearing in her writings in any significant way, and then it is a very different Augustine than the one she wrote about in 1929. In a chapter added to the second edition of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt concludes her account of the debacle of European civilization on a surprisingly hopeful note. "Beginning," she writes, "is the supreme capacity of man . . . *initium ut esset homo creatus est*—'that a beginning be made man was created,' said Augustine. This beginning is guaranteed by each new birth; it is indeed every man." Inspiring as it is, Arendt's quotation from Augustine's *City of God* (Book XII, Ch. 20) is taken out of context. In that section Augustine was not talking about any "capacity of man" but the capacity of *God* to start something new in the universe; he was refuting the Platonic theory of souls eternally coming in and going out of the world. To find in his remark a celebration of man's capacities or even a glimmer of hope for some sort of secular renewal is to find something that is not there.

The *initium* quotation from Augustine is found in several other places in writings after 1958, but it does not appear in the original dissertation. She inserted it some time after 1963 while revising the work for publication. E. P. Ashton had done an English translation, and Arendt was under contract to produce a final version—despite which, after some tinkering, she gave up on it.

GEORGE MCKENNA *is Professor of Political Science at City College of New York and author of the* The Drama of Democracy, *the third edition of which will be published in August by McGraw-Hill.*

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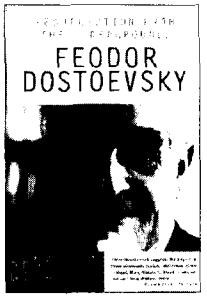

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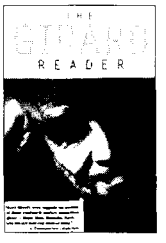

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But she did start, at any rate, and Scott and Stark give us an idea of which parts were substantially changed by affixing the label "A" to the sections left unretouched (except for marginal notes), and the label "B" to the sections rewritten. The introduction (five pages in this edition) Arendt left alone, while Part I and a portion of Part II (fifty-five pages) were rewritten; the rest (forty-seven pages) was largely unchanged.

The plan of the dissertation was to present three parallel concepts of love in Augustine. The first is "love as craving." Christian love, *caritas,* is a craving for God, unlike secular love, *cupiditas,* which craves for worldly fulfillment. Still, both kinds of love represent longing for what is beyond man's power and are thus forms of "unfreedom." Only by transcending "love as craving"—we'll call it *Caritas I*—is man able to find true freedom. This is done by reflecting on our metaphysical "whence," our origin in the eternal will of the Creator. This second form of *caritas* enables us to reach a state of self-forgetfulness, a serene "objectivity" and detachment. The price paid for *Caritas II,* however, is a kind of isolation from the rest of humanity. This becomes clear in exploring the social dimension of this concept of love. Christianity teaches that we should "love our neighbor as ourselves," but this "metaphysical" love empties our egos so completely that neighborly love lacks the warmth of a human encounter. It is detached, abstract, and conditional: I love my neighbor, but only "for the sake of" my relationship with God.

In the last section of the dissertation, "Social Life," Arendt extracts from Augustine a more concrete basis for love of neighbor. Moving from the metaphysical to the historical "whence," *Caritas III* grounds human love on our common descent from Adam and our common inheritance of Adam's sin. We are "a community-in-sinfulness." Somber as it is, this vision of humanity permits the Christian to overcome his isolation from the world by reflecting on the "fellowship of the race." Human estrangement gives rise to a new togetherness in struggle against the world. "The reason one should love one's neighbor is that the neighbor is fundamentally one's equal and both share the same sinful past."

This was the basic outline of the 1929 dissertation. At its end, Arendt makes it clear that the "isolated" and the "social" dimensions of love are not really opposed to one another. While she seems to prefer the "social" version, she allows that the "isolated" form helps us to appreciate the individuality of human be-

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ings. More important, as she notes in several places, *both* the second and third versions are grounded on the proposition that the "world," the human artifice, is a dark and perilous place. Whether we isolate ourselves from the world or struggle against it, to be "in the world," for the Augustine of her dissertation, means "to be in danger."

IT WAS A VERY different Hannah Arendt who returned to the dissertation after nearly forty eventful years. The main change she had undergone was political. The Arendt of 1929 had no interest in politics, while the Arendt of the 1960s was nothing if not political. Not only were most of her writings on politics, her whole outlook was now shaped by the model of man as a *zooan politikon*. If any of Arendt's books is seminal, it is *The Human Condition*, written during the 1950s, a critique of what she regarded as modern "world-alienation."

The heart of the problem, she thought, was the loss of the ancient Greek spirit of political activism. It was in the course of explaining this that she first used the Augustine quotation, "That a beginning be made . . ." Her point was that action is intimately tied to "beginning," starting something new in the world, and that this is "man's supreme capacity." The *Human Condition* is premised on a fierce love of "the world," the realm of existence that the Augustine of her dissertation repeatedly characterizes as a "desert," an "alien" place from which the Christian can only seek deliverance. To the Augustine of her dissertation, *The Human Condition* would seem to be flirting with blasphemy.

Yet it was *The Human Condition*'s argument for love of the world, or at least some savor of it, that Arendt apparently tried to work into her dissertation when she started reworking it in the early 1960s. Augustine's "that a beginning be made" now became "natality," an antidote to "world-alienation." The fact that "we have entered the world through birth" determines our nature as conscious "remembering" beings, and through this remembrance man is able to preserve traces of the human artifice. But what about *Caritas II*, Augustine's concept of love as "self-forgetful" removal from man's world? That, she declares in the rewritten section, "is actually pseudo-Christian." She promises to elaborate on this charge in a later section, but the promise is never kept. The later section—one of those sections *not* rewritten—presents Augustine's concept of love as "estrangement from the world," but nowhere in that section does she call it "pseudo-Christian." On the contrary, she leaves the impression that world-estrangement is authentically Christian because it breaks man from his comfortable habit of depending upon the world's judgments, thus permitting the formation of an interior, if often nagging, Christian conscience. "There is no fleeing from conscience. There is no togetherness and no being at home in the world that can lessen the burdens of conscience."

This "interior" or "metaphysical" concept in *Caritas II* is presented in the original dissertation as a "train of thought" running parallel to the "worldly" vision of love in *Caritas III* and contributing in its own way to man's self-understanding. But when she returned to the dissertation in the 1960s she began sharpening the differences between "metaphysical" and "social" love, hinting that she was about to treat the latter as the more authentically Christian version. But she never reached that point, and about halfway through, she gave up. Scott and Stark suggest that it was because she was so busy during the 1960s that she didn't have the time to finish it, but that doesn't explain why she never returned to the project. The more likely explanation, which I think is supported by the evidence in this half-completed revision, is that Arendt saw that it wasn't working.

One of the most original thinkers of this century, Hannah Arendt was also one of its most self-effacing. She was always attributing to others, "finding" in their thought, ideas that were actually hers. This is what Arendt did with Augustine during the writing of *The Human Condition*. Pulling from its context one of Augustine's polemical jabs at the Platonists, Arendt teased out of it her own highly original concept of world-renewing "natality." But the Augustine of her dissertation did not think that way at all, so when Arendt met up with *him* again, her first impulse may have been to touch him up a bit, make him more world-friendly. She soon must have realized that the Augustine of her dissertation required more than that. She started rewriting the dissertation, only to discover, about midway through, that it was impossible to make her scholarly debut bear the weight of her mature thought, and that the attempt to do so was politicizing and coarsening it. Scott and Stark are to be commended for their painstaking reconstruction of a

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work that was never brought to completion because its author, very sensibly, decided to leave well enough alone.

At the Border of Church & State

When Sacred and Secular Mix: Religious Nonprofit Organizations and Public Money. By Stephen V. Monsma. *Rowman & Littlefield. 237 pp. $27.95.*

***Reviewed by* Keith J. Pavlischek**

When he began his research on religious nonprofit organizations and their relationship to government, Stephen Monsma could hardly have foreseen the wide-ranging political changes that would make it essential reading. The central lesson to be learned from Monsma's study is that while those in the political arena are growing to appreciate the indispensable role of religious nonprofit organizations, serious legal and constitutional obstacles still exist for these organizations.

Perhaps the most promising aspect of the welfare reform debate has been the renewed attention to nongovernmental "mediating structures" in general, and to religious institutions in particular. This has given rise to a host of legislative provisions and proposals: the "Charitable Choice" provision of the Welfare Reform Act of 1996, for instance, prohibits states that contract for services from discriminating against agencies simply because they are religious. Two ambitious social legislative packages currently under consideration in Congress—Sen. Dan Coats' "Project for American Renewal" and the "Community Renewal Project" sponsored by Reps. Jim Talent and J. C. Watts—explicitly draw upon the resources and talents of "faith-based" service providers. Governor George Bush of Texas has created a task force on faith-based programs; Governor John Engler of Michigan has lauded the effectiveness of faith-based charities following Michigan's termination of its general assistance program; and recent Maryland legislation specifically includes the contribution of religious organizations in its plan to get more families off welfare.

This flurry of political activity and increased intellectual attention, however, has proceeded in the almost total absence of careful scholarly research into the religious nonprofit sector. The legal and constitutional context in which religious organizations operate is muddled and often hostile, but Stephen Monsma has now come to argue that solutions exist. Monsma, who teaches at Pepperdine University in California, is the author of *Positive Neutrality* (1993) and *Pursuing Justice in a Sinful World* (1984). While teaching at Calvin College in Michigan, he served as a Democratic state senator. But he later broke with the Democratic Party and began to concentrate his scholarly work on church-state relations.

Using a nationwide survey of 766 nonprofit organizations, Monsma documents the extent and nature of government funds flowing to religiously based nonprofit organizations. He discovers that most religiously based nonprofits receiving public funds are religious in more than a nominal sense. While acknowledging that some organizations have become secularized, Monsma demonstrates that even highly religious organizations receive surprisingly large amounts of public funds. He also discovers that most nonprofits report relatively little overt pressure on their religious practices from government, separationist watchdog organizations such as the ACLU, or the press.

Despite these heartening findings, Monsma concludes that "there are warning signs on the horizon indicating their religious autonomy is in an unsafe, precarious position." A minority—among the more highly religious nonprofits, a sizable minority—experience pressures to compromise their religious character. While relatively few organizations are confronted directly, many do experience indirect threats to religious liberty from legal and bureaucratic inconsistencies: "What one nonprofit is allowed to do, another is not allowed to do; what leads one nonprofit to endure public censure or law suits, another does as a matter of course with no controversy; what some nonprofit officials are concerned they should not or legally cannot do, others do openly and have done so for years."

Monsma's study focuses on three types of nonprofits: child service agencies, international relief and development agencies, and religious colleges and universities. We need more detailed research into organizations focused on drug abuse, elderly and handicapped care, job training, homeless shelters, and the like before we can tell just how represen-

Keith J. Pavlischek *is Director of Crossroads, an evangelical organization in Wynnewood, Pa.*

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tative his sample is. Moreover, Monsma's study concentrates almost exclusively on organizations that are relatively well-established. Agencies with greater experience dealing with governmental bureaucracies and pressures can more easily defend themselves against governmental encroachment. More attention to smaller agencies might provide a broader picture—and might reveal a greater wariness toward government funding.

Monsma, in any case, is not concerned only with presenting the data. As a church-state scholar, he is concerned to give an historical account of the reasons for the muddled government funding of religious nonprofit service agencies, and to offer theoretical prescriptions to allow nonprofits to function for the public good without compromising their autonomy as religious institutions.

TO HIGHLIGHT the legal confusion surrounding religious nonprofits, Monsma invites the reader to imagine two scenes. In one, a teacher in a religious middle school is using a map purchased with funds from the state government. In the other, a child, removed from her home due to suspected child abuse by a live-in boyfriend of her mother, has been placed by a faith-based agency in the home of a deeply religious couple for temporary foster care, paid for by the state government. Before putting the child to bed at night the foster mother seeks to quiet the child's fears by assuring that God is watching over her, and leads her in a simple prayer. Under present legal principles, the teacher is violating church-state separation, while the foster mother is not. This, of course, doesn't make much sense—but in the field of church-state jurisprudence, common sense is an uncommon virtue.

Monsma is not the first to note that the root of the problem lies in the dubious "no-aid" provision articulated by the court in *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947): "No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions." But Everson's no-aid dogma is hard to square with the amount of public money currently being channeled—constitutionally—to religious nonprofits: a surprising 75 percent of the annual social services budget of the New York Roman Catholic archdiocese comes from government sources; 92 percent of Lutheran Social Ministries revenues comes from public funds; and the government gave a total of $19.3 million to World Vision, an evangelical relief and development organization.

"One of the best-kept secrets in the United States," says Monsma, "is that when it comes to public money and religious nonprofit organizations, sacred and secular mix." Monsma's accounting for this remarkable inconsistency between church-state theory and practice is right on target. For the most part, he argues, the constitutional and legal issues that relate to the receipt of public funds and the autonomy of religious institutions were forged within the context of the debate over aid to parochial schools, which in turn cannot be separated from the deep-seated anti-Catholicism that motivated it. After documenting the extent of the anti-Catholic prejudice that underwrote the Court's "no aid to religion" statements, Monsma concludes that the Supreme Court, supported by policy elites and to a large extent the general public, simply did not want tax money to support the Catholic hierarchy's attempt to maintain a separate school system.

And yet, Monsma explains, "The problem was that the same elites wanted public money to flow to—from their point of view—the nonthreatening, less Catholic, and more mainstream colleges and universities, hospitals, disaster relief agencies, child service agencies, homeless shelters, and a host of other educational and social service nonprofit organizations." This initiated "a series of legal principles of dubious constitutional merit."

FACED WITH THE impossibility of the "no-aid-to-religion" ideal, the courts have retreated to a position that permits public money to go to religious organizations so long as the money supports secular services and programs and the organizations are not themselves "pervasively sectarian." Monsma argues the "pervasively sectarian" standard is based on a sacred-secular dualism fundamentally flawed in its assumption that one

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WHY A MONK AT SAINT LOUIS ABBEY?

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A monastery is a place set aside for this attentiveness to God with a view to submission to His transforming action in drawing the individual and the world to Himself. It is a place for alertness to God, friendship with Him, healing for the world. The life of a monk, the witness of a monastery are needed as much as ever in our world where noise, materialism, and the frenetic, frantic pursuit of pleasure are obscuring the call to the simplicity which leads to peace, the call of an infinite person who seeks to dwell with us. It is a happy vocation because in tune with fundamental realities: God, life, joy, the spirit, truth; and it ennobles the lives of others by handing on to them and modeling for them the Good News that offers something to live for, "reasons for living and hoping," a happy, meaningful life.

For the laying open of the self to the purifying action of Christ and His Spirit is the introduction into the community of divine and human persons that every human heart was made for and craves. In this way contemplation builds community. Even the sacrifices that the life entails, the crucifixion of self-indulgent desires that Christ and St. Paul speak of, are surrounded by the promise of joy and made endurable by a growing share in the life of Christ.

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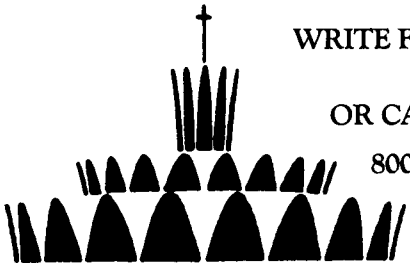

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can disentangle the "sacred" and "secular" aspects of a parochial school kindergarten class, a family counseling center, or a Christian drug treatment program. Moreover, it fails to understand the ways in which basic values, perspectives, and presuppositions underlie all intellectual explorations, counseling theories and practices, approaches to complex social needs, and other such activities.

Not only is the "pervasively sectarian" doctrine philosophically suspect, it is inevitably discriminatory: "For the Court to interpret the First Amendment so as to favor programs rooted in a secularly based faith commitment over ones rooted in a religiously based faith commitment is to disadvantage religion." This, in Monsma's view, runs afoul of the free exercise of religion as guaranteed in the First Amendment: "If, to receive the normal benefits of public policies that similar, secularly based organizations are receiving, a religious nonprofit organization must downplay or give up certain of its religious practices, public policy is interfering with its free exercise of religion." Monsma warns that religious nonprofits that accept government funds on this basis do so at their peril. An agency can't concede that the largest part of its work is "secular" and then expect to defend its right to hire employees in accordance with its religious character.

Apart from a few extreme separationists, writes Monsma, no one wants public funding of religiously based social organizations to end, largely because these agencies are so effective. But massive legal and practical confusion reigns. To resolve this church-state conundrum, Monsma advocates developing with more precision the "equal treatment" line of judicial reasoning. The key to Monsma's position—which he calls "positive neutrality"—"is that government does not recognize, accommodate, or support any one particular religion over any other nor religious or secular worldviews and groups over one another."

Monsma suggests only three basic conditions that the programs and activities of nonprofit agencies would have to meet in order to be eligible for public funds. First, funds could not go to activities and programs that are primarily "other worldly" in nature, by which he means "those that are oriented towards religious worship or teaching, affirming, and celebrating core religious beliefs." At the same time, if the government decides that an activity like drug treatment is worth funding, it cannot rule out funding a drug treatment program simply because it has a strongly religious orientation. Moreover, the government could not override the freedom of the organization to hire counselors in agreement with its religious beliefs, practices, and counseling philosophy.

ONE MUST ASK whether Monsma's "this worldly" or "other worldly" rhetoric is all that helpful. While he insists that "this condition is clearly distinguishable from the current sacred-secular bifurcation that says only activities and programs of religious nonprofits of a secular nature can be funded," one cannot help but wonder if it reintroduces as many problems as the sacred-secular dualism and "pervasively sectarian" rhetoric that he rightly criticizes. I would suggest that it is sufficient to say that worship services, classes in religious doctrine, and the like would, as Monsma says, "have no similar or parallel programs and activities sponsored by secularly based organizations or operated by government itself." If a program, such as drug treatment, is of "public benefit to society" and a nonreligious organization is eligible for funds (or if a government program already exists or is being considered), then a religiously based program would also be eligible. The additional talk of "this worldly" and "other worldly" seems unnecessary.

Monsma also argues that public funds should not go to nonprofits that teach hatred or intolerance or in other ways work to destroy the social fabric fundamental to civil society. (This would rule out such groups as the Ku Klux Klan or neo-Nazi societies, although there will still be hard cases, such as the Nation of Islam.) And he suggests, finally, that nonprofits must be willing to submit to certain limited reviews and licensing standards to ensure that the publicly funded services are in fact being provided. Religious and secular nonprofits would be treated identically in this regard.

Few now dispute the crucial role to be played by mediating structures in the revitalization of civil society. But the appropriate governmental role in this process has not yet been determined. Believing that private citizens can carry the load, libertarian critics want the government out of the welfare business altogether, and thus are not interested in having government empower nonprofits, religious or otherwise. Extreme separationists are altogether too enthusiastic over keeping the public square naked. Many leaders in the religious nonprofit sector similarly subscribe to the understandable yet false presumption that the receipt of public money necessarily means the organization must alter its religious character. What they fear, most policy elites and strict separationist ideologues insist upon: secularization as a condition for government funds. Ironically, by preemptively disarming themselves, these religious believers end up playing right into the hands of the separationists. Monsma, to his great credit, tells us why such preemptive capitulation is not the order of the day.

Before Foucault

CLEANTH BROOKS AND THE RISE OF MODERN CRITICISM. By MARK ROYDEN WINCHELL. *University Press of Virginia. 510 pp. $34.95.*

***Reviewed by* R. V. Young**

I STILL OWN AND still make frequent use of my paperback copy of Cleanth Brooks' *The Well Wrought Urn*, which I purchased for $1.35 more than thirty years ago. What is more,

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I still have fond memories of Brooks' hospitality during an English Department picnic held at his country home while I was a graduate student at Yale a quarter century ago. Finally, Brooks' incisive talk and gracious conviviality during the following reception at the school where I teach, some fifteen years ago, still remains with me as an exemplary image of the proper conduct of academic life. So I am not the most objective reviewer of Mark Royden Winchell's literary biography of the man who, perhaps more than any other, made the study of English literature of central importance in the modern university curriculum. It may be, however, that my personal debt to Cleanth Brooks can serve as an indication of what he has meant to the world of humane letters and higher education during this century in America, and of the loss that world sustained in his recent death.

An unexpected virtue of this book is that the life of Cleanth Brooks turns out to be quite as interesting as that of most poets and novelists. Of course much is owing to Mark Royden Winchell's skill as a biographer. His style is clear and unobtrusive, and he knows how to provide a full picture of his subject without swamping the reader in trivia. Most important, Winchell recognizes that what matters about a man of letters is his work, and details of his life are significant insofar as they explain and illuminate that work. This account of the life of Cleanth Brooks furnishes valuable information about the Southern Agrarian movement, the literary scene at Oxford and Cambridge in the late 1920s, when Brooks was a Rhodes Scholar, the curious relationship between Louisiana State University and the political machine of Huey Long, the crucial role of the *Southern Review* (of which Brooks was a founding editor) in the rise of Southern literature and literary modernism in America, and the development of literary criticism at Yale (where Brooks taught from 1947 till 1975).

In addition, Winchell introduces the numerous novelists and poets, critics and scholars who were Brooks' friends and associates through a long and productive career: Allen Tate, Donald Davidson, John Crowe Ransom, Robert Penn Warren, Katherine Anne Porter, Robert B. Heilman, Maynard Mack, Louis Martz, René Wellek, William Wimsatt—and the list goes on. In providing details of these relationships, Winchell creates the intellectual context for the theme that is indicated by the second half of his title: The Rise of Modern Literary Criticism.

What we learn about Brooks' personal life, apart from the intrinsic interest of learning about the life of a good man, is largely important as an indication of the kind of life that is open to an academic literary man and the kind of model that he can furnish. The "New Criticism" (by now the *old* New Criticism) that Brooks championed, with its insistence on the intrinsic meaning and value of the literary text and its identification of paradox and irony as the essential features of imaginative literature, has often been decried in recent years as "elitist"—as the purely leisurely pursuit of privileged white men.

Although Brooks was a man of substantial affluence by the time of his death, largely as a result of the commercial success of the textbooks he helped to edit, he certainly did not start out that way. The son of a Methodist minister, Brooks grew up in very modest circumstances in a family that moved from one parsonage to another as his father was transferred from church to church in rural Kentucky and Tennessee. Brooks made his way through Vanderbilt and Tulane and eventually was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship by dint of sacrifice, hard work, and the unremitting application of his considerable intellectual gifts. He labored at LSU for nearly fifteen years under the burdens of a daunting teaching schedule and the editing of the *Southern Review* with a small salary and little local appreciation. Still, he managed to write and publish scholarly and critical works of sufficient substance to win him national recognition and appointment to the Yale faculty. If he was an elitist, it was in the sense that everyone associated with a university and the life of the mind should be: he strove always to attain and promote excellence.

The New Criticism that Brooks championed seems to have been a means of coming to terms with the literary modernism that emerged in the early twentieth century in the writings of Eliot, Yeats, Pound, and Joyce, and in their successors. The criticism of T. S. Eliot, in particular, sought a critical and historical justification for his own difficult and obscure poetry in the French symbolists and the English metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, and Eliot's revaluation of these poets implied a revision of literary history—or of the literary canon, to put it in contemporary terms.

Brooks' achievement was to apply the method of close reading, with its emphasis on poetic tension, or paradox, or irony, to virtually the entire English and American literary tradition, including prose fiction and drama as well as nondramatic verse. His early critical works like *Modern Poetry and the Tradition* (1939) and, especially, *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947) were very influential in this development; but undoubtedly his most enduring contribution to literary education arises from the anthologies he edited for college students in freshman composition and introductory literature courses: *Understanding Poetry* (1938), *Understanding Fiction* (1943) with Robert Penn Warren, and *Understanding Drama* (1945) with Robert B. Heilman.

These textbooks all went through more than one edition and influenced the way in which literature was taught for decades. It is important to recall that they were conceived and composed not at Yale but at Louisiana State for students who would typically be majoring in agriculture, accounting, or mechanical engineering. What Brooks and his collaborators offered such students was a means of independent interpretation and judgment of virtually any literary work they might en-

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counter. Perhaps the most important legacy of the New Criticism is thus pedagogical: it made English courses the principal vehicle for teaching the average American college student how to read and think critically; it provided the lower and middle class students who began to flood higher education in the fifties and sixties (among whom I number myself) with the opportunity for intellectual and imaginative cultivation. It is hard to conceive of a more democratic form of elitism.

BROOKS WAS HIMSELF a practicing Christian (as an adult he moved from his boyhood Methodism to the Episcopal Church), but there is little overt treatment of religion in his literary criticism. In one of the exceptions, *The Hidden God* (1963), he remarks that at least some of the new critics did not stress the religious dimension of literature because—despite Matthew Arnold's expectation that poetry would replace Christianity—religion and literature are different, if not unrelated, activities.

A fundamental theme of Brooks' theory is that literary works are not sermons or treatises; stories, novels, and poems are, like plays, essentially dramatic, not rhetorical. Hence a work of literature will be most effectively religious not by propounding abstract dogma, but by representing human experience concretely and honestly—whatever the professed beliefs of the author. The thesis of *The Hidden God* is that the work of unbelieving writers like Yeats and Faulkner, or of Eliot before his conversion, can present a vision of reality of profound significance to Christians insofar as it is faithful to the truth of human experience. Though Beethoven's final religious views are somewhat obscure, and Mozart was associated with the Masons, their settings of the Mass furnish far greater enhancement to the liturgy than the hymns being composed by devout believers in our time. By the same token, the first thing a Christian should ask about a work of literature is whether it is honestly and skillfully crafted.

Mark Royden Winchell has crafted a fine biography of Cleanth Brooks. He not only presents an effective narration of his subject's life, but he also shows why that life was important to American education and culture. This book provides a real sense of how much Brooks contributed to the academic study of literature, and of what a decline has occurred since he has been displaced by Michel Foucault as the most influential thinker in university English departments.

BRIEFLY NOTED

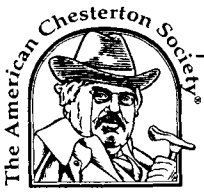
THE LORD. By ROMANO GUARDINI. Translated by Elinor Castendyk Briefs. *Regnery. 629 pp. $14.95 paper.*

These meditations on the person and life of Jesus Christ were originally published in 1937, and translated in 1954. They are "spiritual commentaries of some four years of Sunday services," written during perhaps the most ominous decade in twentieth-century Christianity. The book's profundity, its endurance for sixty years, and a new preface by Cardinal Ratzinger all highly recommend it. Guardini's refusal of pious sentimentalities and recognition of "the dangers of orthodoxy" continue to challenge believers—just as his skepticism of quests for the historical-psychological Jesus and his recognition of the diabolic power of our "over-enlightened all-destructive age" chastise our unbelief. But such criticisms of belief and unbelief are subordinate to a vision of Jesus as unnormed Lord of all reality who "can never be intellectually unified." Guardini's seven dozen brief chapters begin with the eternal and temporal origins of Jesus, take the reader through Gospel scenes and themes, and conclude with chapters on Acts, some Pauline epistles, and the Book of Revelation. Ending with the apocalyptic Lord is no accident, for Guardini suspends his readers between time and eternity, leaving us with questions about both. Some will quibble with pieces of this fine translation (e.g., "[God's] autocratic decision" for *selbstherrlich Ratschluss;* "the complete nullity" for *die völlige Belanglosigkeit* of "the historical Jesus"). But those who agree that we live in apocalyptic times of war and loneliness will find much here on which to pray.

— James J. Buckley

THE BATTLE FOR CHRISTMAS. By STEPHEN NISSENBAUM. *Knopf. 381 pp. $30.*

Not much escapes the scrutiny of this University of Massachusetts history professor. From the origins of the interior Christmas tree (no, the Hessians did not bring it to America from Germany during the Revolutionary War) to the message of Clement Moore's poem, "A Visit from St. Nicholas" (yes, there is meaning behind St. Nick's placing his finger "aside of his nose") to an intriguing interpretation of Dick-



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ens' *A Christmas Carol*, Nissenbaum shows how in the nineteenth century there emerged the tradition that is now, more or less, our way of observing Christmas. Concentrating largely on America, he examines in minute detail the transformation of Christmas from a rather unruly winter carnival to a quiet, domestic, and child-centered event. At times the detail can be numbing, but Nissenbaum keeps the narrative flowing with a minimum of academic vocabulary. Though the epilogue indulges an odd thesis about acceptance of Santa Claus and Christmas trees serving to protect nineteenth-century children from grasping the connection between family life and the commercial economy, the book remains a good reference volume for all those who enjoy learning how we came to do the things we do.

— Larry Bailey

Philosophical Foundations of Tort Law. Edited by David G. Owen. *Oxford University Press. 509 pp. $75.*

"Torts" is the branch of law that provides remedies for injuries as diverse as a punch in the nose, an automobile accident, a bungled surgery, and a defamation of character. Torts law was not much studied until the late 1800s, with most scholarship devoted only to case commentary. More recently, however, interest has begun to emerge in analyzing the very notion of torts law—and this important book is one result, collecting twenty-two essays on the topic. Everyone admits that torts law has no original philosophical foundation, but emerged haphazardly from the old common law writ of trespass. The question that legal scholars face is whether there is any philosophical explanation or justification for contemporary law. As a torts teacher, I am impressed by the sophistication of the philosophical dialogue in this volume, which should become the leading reference for years to come. I remain skeptical, however, about the effort's ultimate success. Legal philosophers typically claim too much for torts law. I prefer a more modest explanation of torts law as a highly particularized process to resolve disputes over the application of general standards for civil responsibility. The failure of most victims to claim compensation suggests that for many injuries there is no dispute compelling enough to require intervention. The use of torts law to resolve conflict may fail to satisfy the philosophers who want it to provide for the victim's economic welfare, or to deter inefficient economic behavior, or to vindicate moral rights and duties. But when it works well American torts law resolves civil conflicts over harmful behavior not so much by applying elaborate principles as by combining the wisdom of legal professionals and lay juries to convert generalized standards into particularized judgments on specific facts. Philosophical explanations of torts law tend to overlook this process. Only one essay in this volume even mentions the role of the jury, but so long as we use jurors in conflict resolution, there will be practical limitations on how much legal philosophers can do for torts law—whether in expanding its scope, or limiting the effect of the sometimes enormous judgments juries bring in, or finding a coherent philosophical theory of the process.

— Carl S. Hawkins

Jesus Living in Mary. Edited by Stefano De Fiores. *Montfort Publications (Bay Shore, NY). 1,380 pp. $34.95.*

This "handbook" of the spirituality of St. Louis Marie de Montfort (1673-1716) is more than a handful. Montfort's *True Devotion to Mary*, a classic of Christocentric and Trinitarian piety, is finding a new audience today with the growing, and ecumenical, interest in the role of the Mother of God (Theotokos) in the plan of salvation. The contributors to the present book explore that devotion from numerous angles in the course of setting forth Montfort's life, teaching, and continuing influence.

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939-1950). By Bohdan R. Bociurkiw. *Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press (University of Toronto). 310 pp. $39.95.*

Now that the Soviet archives are opening up, much new light is thrown on the struggle of Christians under the Communist regime. This scholarly volume by a distinguished expert on Eastern Europe at Carleton University, Ottawa, will no doubt become an essential reference for understanding the complicated relationship between Ukrainian Christianity and the Kremlin under Stalin's brutal repression.

Facing East: A Pilgrim's Journey into the Mysteries of Orthodoxy. By Frederica Mathewes-Green. *HarperCollins. 245 pp. $20.*

Mathewes-Green and her husband, an Episcopal priest, entered into communion with the Orthodox Church after many hesitations, doubts, and not a few pratfalls. This is an engaging and frequently humorous account of one family's journey toward what the author depicts as a destination of humanity celebrated and fulfilled in splendor. The book will no doubt be a welcome companion for the many Christians in this country who are considering "the Orthodox alternative."

Alex: Building a Life. By Alexander Singer. *Gefen Books (Hewlett, NY; 1-800-477-5257). 273 pp. $18.95 cloth, $12.95 paper.*

Alexander Singer was a young American who "made *aliyah*" (i.e., emigrated to Israel), joined an elite paratroop unit, and was killed on September 15, 1987, his twenty-fifth birthday, in a battle against terrorists near the Israel-Lebanon border. A sensitive young man who sought not glory or adventure so much as the special fraternity of those who share hard trials, he once wrote to his parents that he wanted "only the chance to give more." *Alex: Building a Life* is his autobiography in letters,

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journal entries, and drawings (he was a sketch artist of no mean talent), collected and published posthumously by his family. The book's subtitle is derived from Abraham Joshua Heschel's observation that young people should "remember that there is meaning beyond absurdity. Let them be sure that every deed counts, that every word has power. . . . And, above all, let them remember to build a life as if it were a work of art." This volume powerfully exemplifies the wisdom contained in Heschel's advice, tracing the inner struggles and self-imposed trials of a young life that had truly been brought to a point. Though its most obvious appeal will be to Jewish readers, *Alex: Building a Life* will be appreciated as a moving testament by all who subscribe to the view that one finds one's life by giving it. With a foreword by Sir Martin Gilbert, Winston Churchill's official biographer.

THE READER'S COMPANION TO MILITARY HISTORY. Edited by ROBERT COWLEY and GEOFFREY PARKER. *Houghton Mifflin. 573 pp. $45.*

Good, concise articles on various wars, battles, and military personages, plus accessible treatments of technical aspects of warfare (e.g., logistics, intelligence, disposal of the dead) as well as entries on war as represented in art, film, literature, and music. A weak link, however, is the dearth of useful material placing war in the context of politics and international relations; there is neither an article nor even an index reference to "diplomacy," for instance. Moreover, while the editors reluctantly concede that they have "privileged" Western wars and methods of battle (PC-speak is everywhere it seems), they give only perfunctory treatment to the contribution of Western religion and philosophy in elaborating principles of the "just war" and in reflecting on the ultimate causes and nature of continuing "wars and rumors of war." Still, for the most part, *The Reader's Companion to Military History* succeeds admirably in its stated goal of compressing "to manageable proportions" that aspect of our fallenness which is war.

The Incarnate Creator

Light falls on the door in an oblique plane of cream
like something in Vermeer, and comes into this room,
to be met by red and blue Fisher-Price disarray.
Out in the yard, bare oak branches sway
in the warm April breeze. A red jacket lies thrown
over a cream chair, where Dr. Seuss sits on loan
from the downtown library.
Here are all the books
he carefully thumbs; here is the bedroom mirror he looks
at in the morning; here are the blue stairs he loves to climb
with unsteady but careless steps. Life is here, and time
has little meaning in the abundance he provides.
This home's narrow rooms scarcely contain his wide-ranging strides,
as he considers the territory he finds day by day.
He waves his hand and epiphanies forth what he may.
Just over there, for instance, beyond the lighted door,
is the world he has created, creates, with every Word:
Door, Light, Sun, Tree, Upstairs and Down, the manifold
outsplashing of the thing-ness streaming forth from of old.
Angels shine in the oak, as for Blake, beyond the lighted door
and announce mortal hope, Life Incarnate, once more.
He creates. He proclaims. What he says is, is.
The paradox: Eternity within Time. Always, he lives.

Craig Payne

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Why Liberal Catholicism Is Suicidal

The liberal, anti-doctrinal spirit is poisoning the Catholic Church in America. Liberal Catholics don't like to talk about sin and its consequences. But then why did Christ bother to get crucified? And what are we saved from? Liberal priests are silent about Hell — but if there's no Hell, why be good? Indeed, why go to church? Not surprisingly, church attendance has dropped dramatically. Liberals are forever bellyaching about the "sexist, homophobic, oppressive" Church. Thus they're unable to attract many converts. Liberal clerics excuse their people from the Church's high sexual standards. No wonder certain of them would excuse themselves too, hence so many sex scandals among the clergy. Liberal priests don't explain Catholic teaching to their flocks. No wonder Catholics are being won over by fundamentalists, cults, and New Agers, who *do* know what they believe and why.

Liberal Catholicism denies the binding character of Scripture, tradition, and Magisterium: One need only "follow one's conscience," which amounts to doing only what's convenient. Why belong to a church which preaches *that*? People instinctively do what's convenient, without any coaxing from the clergy. Liberal Catholics are just imitators of liberal *Protestants*. By making Christianity comfortably ambiguous, have liberal Protestant churches been flooded with converts? No. They're actually dying! Why? Because they offer *no authoritative answers* to life's big questions: why am I here? what is true religion and virtue? how do I get to Heaven? By essentially turning themselves into debate clubs and therapy centers, they've failed to offer people anything unique and unsurpassable. They elicit no commitment and little interest.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

God and Bigotry at Yale

Yale Law School, like others, makes provisions for prospective employers to interview students on campus. In December 1994, the Christian Legal Society (CLS), a national organization that has hired Yale students before and has many Yale graduates as members, applied to take part in the February 1995 interview process. The Yale application form stipulates that employers must take a pledge not to discriminate on the basis of, inter alia, religion. With its application, CLS sent a letter pointing out that it is of course a religious organization, that it takes religion into account in hiring, and that it assumes Yale recognizes the pertinent exemption for religion stipulated in, for instance, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and other laws.

Not at all, responded Barbara Safriet, associate dean of the Law School. "While I do not question the sincerity of your organization's beliefs, I must affirm Yale Law School's equally strong commitment to the views articulated in its nondiscrimination policy." CLS is excluded from the hiring program. Gregory Baylor, assistant director of CLS, promptly wrote back that Yale's position means that "CLS must alter its religious beliefs to gain access" to the program. "Does Yale Law School really intend to pressure religious nonprofits like CLS to alter their religious beliefs? If so, why? We assume that it is not because you disagree with our interpretation of Scripture or because you believe that Scripture is not a reliable basis for decision making." He again cited laws and court decisions upholding religious exemptions from nondiscrimination regulations.

The curt answer from Safriet was uncompromising: "We cannot offer our placement services to employers who, for whatever reason, do not abide by our nondiscrimination policy in its entirety." A few months later, in July 1995, CLS wrote again, pointing out that Harvard Law School had at first excluded CLS from its interview program, but when a couple of Harvard law professors got wind of it they promptly went to the front office and had that policy reversed. The Harvard professors, it should be noted, were Mary Ann Glendon and Alan Dershowitz, who disagree on many things but are strongly opposed to antireligious bigotry. No matter. The answer from Yale was that Harvard is not Yale.

By this time, a number of prominent Yale alumni and experts on religion and law had written Yale's dean, Anthony Kronman, protesting the school's exclusionary policy. The experts included such worthies as Marc Stern of the American Jewish Congress, Dean Kelley of the National Council of Churches, and Forest Montgomery of the National Association of Evangelicals. "A public institution," they pointed out, "would be prohibited from penalizing religious employers for exercising their rights under the First Amendment as well as federal statutes." The implication was that independent institutions, such as Yale Law School, should be able to go farther than government agencies in respecting diversity, especially the free exercise of religion.

Beginning with Dean Kronman's response of August 8, 1995, it would become evident that quite the opposite is the case. One of the pleasures of a private school is that you can be as discriminatory (against religion) as you wish. "The Law School has made a lasting commitment to oppose discrimination against its students on the basis of race, sex, and sexual orientation, among other considerations. . . . To do anything else would be to act contrary to our own ideals and sense of community," declard Kronman. Nonetheless, the dean said he would take up the CLS matter with a faculty committee. Since Kronman had raised the question of sexual orientation, Baylor responded for CLS that a religious organization has a right to take "sexual conduct" into account when making hiring decisions. He awaited the outcome of the faculty's deliberation.

And he waited. Four months later, on December 8, he wrote inquiring what was happening, since

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Kronman had said that the faculty would consider the matter "at an early date." The dean responded with a brief note explaining that the pertinent committee "has been late getting started." Yet another six months passed and CLS had still heard nothing. On June 6, 1996, Baylor wrote: "I do appreciate the possible sensitivity of this issue on your campus and the suitability of a careful analysis. However, the long delay is becoming increasingly unacceptable, especially given the remarkable consensus among religious groups of divergent ideologies and faiths on this issue. Although I can only speculate, it is difficult to imagine that Yale would procrastinate so badly on a matter involving some other 'constituency.'"

A month later, Dean Kronman came back with the definitive answer. The committee had concluded that Yale should allow no exemptions on religious or other grounds. "Exclusion on any of these grounds would be antithetical to the community the Law School aspires to create. . . . The ideal of community that animates the life of the School demands this." If Yale's view of nondiscrimination gets in the way of the free exercise of religion, too bad for the free exercise of religion. Constitutional protections of free exercise may be fine for government and lesser institutions, but they do not fit Yale's "ideal of community." As Chevy Chase might have said, "We're Yale Law School—and you're not."

As it happens, Dean Kronman deems himself something of an expert on the ethics of civil community. In a 1993 book, published, one notes, by Harvard University Press (*The Lost Lawyer: Failing Ideals of the Legal Profession*), the dean is eloquent on the need for "political fraternity." "Tolerance, unaccompanied by the spirit of sympathetic fellow-feeling that distinguishes the condition of political fraternity, is not enough," he declares. "For political fraternity to exist, it is not necessary that the different views which the members of a community take of its values and purposes all be assessable from some common point of view. Indeed the demand for political fraternity is likely to be greatest in just those situations where the competing conceptions of the disputants are not comparable in this way." It is necessary "to see the concerns of others in their best light." We are sometimes presented with "a conflict among incommensurable values, and if a community is to survive such disagreements, it is reasonable to think that it needs something more than disinterested toleration. What it needs is political fraternity."

Precisely. As, for instance, in trying to engage in "the spirit of sympathetic fellow-feeling" and to understand in the "best light" the "incommensurable values" of Christians and Jews who think that organizations devoted to advancing their religious purposes should reasonably take religion into account in hiring people. Or, to put it more simply, as in having a decent respect for the free exercise of religion.

It turns out that Dean Kronman's "spirit of sympathetic fellow-feeling" is rather anemic. It certainly does not extend to the millions of fellow-citizens whom he consigns to the darkness of the "Religious Right." He was invited to give a lecture, in February 1996, at Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham, Alabama. He chose as his topic "Civility." The quality of the dean's civility is very strained indeed. The members of what he calls the religious right are not legitimate participants in the political community, he asserts, because they "treat politics in a strictly instrumental fashion" for promoting other ends, namely, the family and church. The "decrease in the appetite for citizenship," Kronman claimed, "correlates with an increasing devotion to family and church." It follows that such people are not really concerned for the "common good."

Set aside for the moment that this ludicrous claim is contrary to all we know from the social sciences, and contrary to the keenest analyses of American democracy from Tocqueville to the present day. Set aside, I say, Dean Kronman's thoroughly muddled understanding of how our society and polity work. One is even more struck by the irony that his exclusive identification of authentic citizenship with concern for the polis as a whole is logically antithetical to his own flaunting of Yale's private status, by virtue of which it has the right to defy both constitutional protections and common decencies when it comes to respecting the free exercise of religion. It would seem that the "decrease in the appetite for citizenship" does indeed correlate with a rigid devotion to "the ideal of community that animates the life" of Yale Law School. The confused contentions of Dean Kronman suggest that he—and, according to him, his colleagues—are prone to an antireligious bigotry that is the enemy of the civility he claims to champion.

FT

The Creeping Coup D'Etat

At age eighty-four, Mr. Park Chamberlain of Woodside, California, now retired from practice, has had a lot of time to think about matters judicial, and he has been especially pleased by our pressing the question of the judicial usurpation of politics. From 1934 to 1937 he studied at Yale Law School under worthies such as William O. Douglas, Abe Fortas,

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Thurman Arnold, and Fred Rodell. That was during the New Deal when the Nine Old Men on the Supreme Court were threatening what today would be called Big Government. His worthy teachers—all "liberals" according to the nomenclature of the day—drummed into their students the premier lesson of "the wickedness of judicial resistance to the popular will."

The times were exciting, Mr. Chamberlain writes. "To be young was very heaven. Over the teacups in our lounge we debated ways of bringing the lawless judges to heel, and similar discussion filled the law journals and newspaper editorials." The great question so urgently posed then was: Can democracy survive under so powerful a nonelected body? As it happened, FDR managed to restructure the Court and the sense of crisis subsided. Folks at Yale settled back to enjoy what was anticipated as a golden age of judicial restraint. "How then can it be," writes Mr. Chamberlain, "that now some six decades later, the Supreme Court and its judicial underlings have taken over the minutest detail of state and federal prison administration, state criminal procedure, state educational systems, the approval or disapproval of books in public libraries and lastly—indeed as a necessity to support the grandiose programs ordained—*even the taxing power.*"

The great change came, Mr. Chamberlain believes, with the Warren Court and the 1954 *Brown* decision. Before that, judicial review entailed a negative veto power; in striking down a law, the Court simply said, "You can't do that." Now the Court began to exercise what Chamberlain calls a "positive veto." After saying what could not be done, the Court now adds: "And therefore you must do this, and exactly this and only this; and to see that you do, we will pursue you like avenging furies over the years, directing and overseeing your each and every act, and furthermore (and what a furthermore) if what we command you to do costs more money than you can legally raise, we will not only order you to raise taxes, but specifically compel you to levy taxes as we shall dictate."

In what Mr. Chamberlain terms a "creeping coup d'état," the Court transformed its judicial role into a legislative role, and assumed executive powers in implementing its own laws. As for the People, sometimes referred to as "the fourth branch of government," they can safely be ignored by judges who are accountable to nobody but themselves. Chamberlain writes, "What we have seen, of course, is a coup d'état—just as blatantly a coup d'état as any lawless takeover of government in a banana republic. The principal difference is, of course, that it has not been sudden and bloody, but mostly peaceful and bit by bit."

And as for his revered teachers, Douglas, Fortas, Arnold, Rodell, et al., they quickly appreciated the great good that could be done (at least by their lights) through judicial ukase, and reversed their principles of constitutional interpretation, drumming into the heads of another generation of students the great wickedness of popular resistance to the judicial will, precisely the opposite of what they taught Mr. Chamberlain and his classmates. So what is to be done? Mr. Chamberlain notes that in California a long-suffering but finally enraged electorate reasserted its right to govern by booting three imperial judges off its Supreme Court. "Let us hope that some day (after my time, alas) we will see a restoration of the power in the people to mete out the same fate to federal judges who have been faithless to their trust."

A creeping coup d'état. Not a bad phrase, that. Also useful is the distinction between a negative and positive veto, between the Court's proscriptive and prescriptive powers. William F. Buckley has recently written: "Some of the issues raised by FIRST THINGS point to ultimate divisions; others derive from temperamental reflexes. In the abstract, the point is obviously reachable when a rogue society forfeits the loyalty of responsible and courageous citizens. It is not always easy to recognize that point, which often passes by societies that wake to find a despotism in power."

As we have insisted in these pages, this government has not forfeited the loyalty of its citizens, but the judicial usurpation of politics does constitute a despotism in the making, and partly in place. It is gratifying to see other publications taking up this question with the urgency that it deserves. Thanks in part to the timely action of a federal judge in California who decided that his one vote nullifies the judgment of 55 percent of the electorate who voted to end racial and other discriminations in the form of affirmative action. Some readers have complained that the discussion of judicial usurpation so far has been short on remedies. As the discussion continues, possible remedies will be canvassed with care. For starters, however, it is no little thing that we be aroused from sleep.

FT

RELIGION WITHIN THE LIMITS OF MORALITY ALONE

R. R. Reno got it exactly right. He writes, "The end result is the situation which drives traditionalists to distraction: modern theologians who repudiate the authority of Christian doctrine but insist upon a role in teaching and proclaiming that doctrine." That is

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the end result, says Reno, who teaches theology at Creighton University in Omaha, of the entire project called modern theology. And it is most particularly the end result of contemporary feminist theology, which is solidly in the tradition of Kant's theological work, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone.* In that work, Christian belief and practice is subjected to rigorous critique by Kant's moral vision.

Reno's article in the current issue of *Pro Ecclesia,* "Feminist Theology as Modern Project," gives particular attention to the work of Elizabeth Johnson, who is very much in the mainstream of academic theology (she is a former president of the Catholic Theological Society of America), and Rosemary Radford Ruether, who for decades has been one of the shapers of the feminist project. Like Kant, both subject the entirety of the Christian tradition to a moral critique. In a book that Reno calls her feminist summa, *She Who Is,* Johnson sets forth the normative theological principle: "In the course of this program [of feminist theology] one criterion recurs as a touchstone for testing the truth and falsity, the adequacy and inadequacy, the coherence and incoherence of theological statements and religious structures. This criterion, variously enunciated, is the emancipation of women toward human flourishing."

Applying that criterion, says Johnson, results in "a new experience of God" which is "a new event in the religious history of humankind." Some critics claim that, in fact, it results in a new religion that is not Christianity. To that, Johnson and others respond that they are the ones who are faithful to the tradition, rescuing its "essence" and "true meaning" from the constricting shell of "literalism," also known as fundamentalism. Reno states their position this way: "Precisely because the dogmatic form of received formulations is intrinsically defective, the tradition requires the red pencil of the modern theologian. Without the ministrations of the modern theologian, without the critiques and correctives born of the distinctive genius of the present age, the apostolic tradition would be a dead letter. When the day is done, modern theology holds the key which unlocks the gospel."

In all this, the feminist theologians are faithful epigones of Immanuel Kant. They cannot abide the particularity of revelation, as in the particular person of Jesus as God incarnate or in the possibility that the finite language of doctrine is capable of bearing the infinite truth about God. "Witness Kant's treatment of Jesus," Reno writes. "Kant affirms Jesus as a representative of moral rectitude, but that affirmation is hollow, for the part of Jesus which makes him a person rather than a principle is precisely that part which Kant seeks to excise from his reading of Scripture."

So with Johnson and others, particulars such as Jesus' cross and resurrection are but symbols to be judged as useful or not, depending on whether they advance contemporary understandings of the emancipation of women. Reno incisively makes the point that this leaves us without any authentic communion with God, since the only fixed point of reference is not God and his revelation but the "inner self." "Thus, the anchor becomes oneself, and one clings to one's sentiments and experiences with a tenacity born of knowing that otherwise one is adrift." I have offered here but a sampling of insights from an article that is an intelligently sympathetic, but finally devastating, critique of the dominant forms of feminist theology now current in the academy.

As Reno knows, the children of Kant are hardly limited to feminists. The family of modern theology embraces all those who have attempted for purposes ideological, political, or psychological to hijack the Christian tradition. A good rule of thumb is that, whenever you hear a theologian speak about "the essence" of Christianity, he is probably promoting something other than Christianity. Christianity is not an essence or principle but the story of the world, and is composed of the inconvenient historical particularities of God's revelation of Himself in Israel and the Church. Establish a criterion by which you strip away what is difficult and you end up with a new but very old religion that is, finally, the idolatrous worship of the Self.

"Americanism" Lives On

I don't know if the editors intended the juxtaposition, but the same issue of *Pro Ecclesia* includes another, although very different, display of "religion within the limits of morality alone." Michael J. Baxter of Notre Dame offers a blistering critique of the way historians have construed the Catholic experience in America. "Writing History in a World Without Ends" is in some ways a brilliant polemic against major historians of American Catholicism, including the late John Tracy Ellis, Jay Dolan, and David O'Brien. All of them, writes Baxter, portray American Catholicism as a success story because Catholicism ended up by fitting neatly into their understandings of the American Way of Life. Baxter's title points to the fact that these historians assumed that there is no conflict over "ends" between Catholicism and Americanism. Part of Baxter's argument is that Rome was right when, at the turn of the century, it condemned "Americanism." American bishops and intellectuals dismissed Americanism as a "shadow heresy," but that, Baxter suggests, is only because they were so deeply implicated in it.

It is a provocative thesis and well worth an argument. Among Baxter's villains is Father John Courtney Murray, the Jesuit who did more than anyone else to make the case, finally ratified by the

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Church, that the kind of democratic pluralism experienced in the United States is compatible with Catholic teaching. Murray, says Baxter, made Christian truth claims safe for, and subordinate to, Americanism. This is hardly a new criticism of Murray. While Baxter is a pacifist and would on most questions be located on the left, the same charge is relentlessly pressed by such as David Schindler and the *Communio* circle, who are viewed as champions of Catholic conservatism.

Like all things human, Murray's was a limited achievement. Contra Baxter and other critics, Murray was well aware that a conflict over "ends" could come into political play when the moral assumptions of a society are badly fragmented. See, for instance, Murray's posthumously published article in these pages, raising an alarm about the Supreme Court's school prayer decisions and the ascendancy of a militant secularism in our public life ("A Common Enemy, A Common Cause," October 1992). Baxter himself, albeit in a footnote, quotes Murray as writing, "It has been remarked that only in a disintegrating society does politics become a controversy over ends; it should simply be a means to ends already agreed on with sufficient unanimity."

During most of Murray's life, he believed, and rightly so, that that agreement marked the happy circumstance of American public life. Under the pressure of the judicial usurpation of politics, but under other pressures as well, it is now evident that ours has become what Murray called "a disintegrating society." Baxter warns against judging earlier thinkers by the standards of our own time, but I'm afraid that he does precisely that in the case of Murray and others.

Consider, for instance, *Man and the State*, a 1951 work by the French philosopher Jacques Maritain, who stood in a line running from John Carroll to Tocqueville to Murray, all of whom celebrated the happy circumstance that made politics in America a matter of means rather than ends. Procedural rather than ideological politics was possible in America, according to this view, because shared moral convictions and habits of civic virtue were so secure. The question of ends was defined and secured by religion, and permeated the body politic. Those who today read Maritain and others on the American circumstance can easily accuse them of being pathetically naive. Much too easily. The right lesson to be drawn is not about their naiveté but about how far the disintegration of society has progressed in the past four decades.

Baxter's article contains penetrating criticisms of Catholics who subordinate the faith to being of "service" to social establishments of which they have no fundamental criticism. Although they had somewhat different views of what constitutes progress, Baxter writes, Ellis, Dolan, and O'Brien all assume that "the Church's destiny lies in finding its home in the United States of America." He is particularly scathing in his judgment of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), whose activities David O'Brien, picking up on Martin Marty's idea of "public church," praises as exemplifying "public Catholicism." Baxter writes: "'Public Catholicism' never seriously considers a scenario in which the United States of America proves incapable of adhering to the teachings of the gospel, or to the precepts of the natural law, or even to the watered-down natural law principles regularly churned out by the NCCB in the form of public policy recommendations." The story told by Ellis et al. "should be read as a neo-Constantinian narrative." Readers will recognize here the influence of Methodist ethicist Stanley Hauerwas and his familiar condemnation of "doing ethics for Caesar," which is not surprising since Baxter is a student of Hauerwas.

What Kind of Church?

"Writing History in a World Without Ends" is a bracing polemic, and much of what Baxter says should be taken to heart. But finally one must ask whether it is not true here, as Reno says is true of feminist theology, that "modern theology marches to Kant's orders." Philosophically and theologically, Baxter is light years removed from Kant. But he, too, offers a version of "religion within the limits of morality alone." For instance, he again and again excoriates Ellis for thinking it a good thing that the Catholic bishops did not collectively take sides in the Civil War. Thus, says Ellis, they preserved the unity of the Catholic Church, rather than dividing along political lines as happened in major Protestant denominations. Catholics fought on both sides, sometimes in positions of high command.

Baxter does not think that a good thing. "What kind of ecclesiology is it," he asks, "that allows Ellis to suggest that the Church is united even as its members are arrayed against each other in battle?" At another point, he notes scornfully that in 1784 John Carroll reported that there were 15,800 Catholics in Maryland, of whom 3,000 were slaves. What kind of Church is it, Baxter taunts, where people could buy and sell their brothers and sisters in Christ?

What kind of Church is it, indeed? Forget the way in which Baxter egregiously and, I am afraid, smugly imposes contemporary moral criteria upon the past. Should the bishops in 1860, in the manner of today's NCCB, have taken sides or employed "watered-down natural law principles" in the form of policy recommendations? And should they have taken the side of the North or the South? Given that history is written by the victors, most would say they should have sided with the North. But if doing ethics for Caesar is such a bad thing—and I think it a

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deeply problematic thing—it shouldn't matter whether the Caesar in question wins or loses. Should the Catholic Church have declared with magisterial authority that the cause of the North was legitimate and the cause of the South illegitimate, and therefore no Catholic could fight for the South? I very much doubt it.

"What kind of ecclesiology is it that allows Ellis to suggest that the Church is united even as its members are arrayed against each other in battle." It is, quite simply, an ecclesiology that is not "within the limits of morality alone." It is an understanding of Christ and the Church that is constituted by revealed truth, dogma, sacramental bonds, ordered ministry, and diverse traditions of discipleship. What kind of ecclesiology is it, Baxter wants to know, that suggests that the Church is united even as some members are free and others are slaves? For an answer to that question, one might read again St. Paul's letter to Philemon. Obviously, I am not making an argument for slavery or for the cause of the South. Rather, it is an argument for a doctrine of the Church that rests on more than the one pillar of ethics. The Church is constituted more by mystery than by morality.

There are many dimensions of Christian existence and of living ecclesially—doctrinal, sacramental, liturgical, institutional, affective. It is a thin and fragile ecclesiology that cannot survive the tragic circumstance in which brothers in Christ—arriving at different positions in moral dispute—find themselves arrayed against one another in battle. Finally, Baxter, like Elizabeth Johnson and Rosemary Radford Ruether, is a child of Kant, a modern theologian who critiques the entirety of the tradition by a criterion of his choosing. His criterion is pacifism, joined to a cluster of moral sensibilities on other issues. To be fair, he would say that pacifism is not a criterion of his choice but is made imperative by the gospel. This is the argument that is so powerfully, if unconvincingly, advanced in *The Politics of Jesus* by John Howard Yoder, whom Baxter thanks for help with his essay. To be fair again, Johnson, Ruether, and their feminist colleagues would also claim that their understanding of the emancipation of women is made imperative by the gospel.

Unlike Johnson and Ruether, Baxter would no doubt deny that he is part of the modern theology project. And on most questions of theological substance I am sure he is right to deny it. But there is the formal similarity that he and those of like mind take a piece of the Christian reality through time, and by that piece they critique the whole. There are, of course, points of reference by which the tradition can and should be held accountable. These points of reference—Scripture, councils, the sense of the faithful—are themselves part of the tradition and their use, which makes possible the development of the tradition, is defined by the tradition. It is all very complex, and how it works is set forth by, for instance, John Henry Newman on "the development of doctrine," an argument that has been formally embraced by the Catholic Church. This is not the place to go into the details of that argument, except to note that—*pace* Johnson, Ruether, Baxter, and Kant—it is in no way reducible to "religion within the limits of morality alone." (Father Baxter is currently engaged in a mighty battle with the theology department at Notre Dame. The above criticisms notwithstanding, I'm on his side. More on that next month.)

FT

Friends of the Court, Friends of the Vulnerable

Thirty-nine organizations and coalitions filed amicus curiae briefs urging the Supreme Court to reverse lower-court rulings bestowing constitutional status on physician-assisted suicide (PAS). Here are excerpts you might want to keep handy when the topic comes up for discussion.

"**American Geriatrics Society:** 'Proponents of a constitutional right to PAS expect the practice to be limited to persons who are acting voluntarily, without undue influence or coercion. The image is that of an independent, capable person thoughtfully evaluating his or her options, unaffected by biased third parties or other circumstances. This is so far from the experience of dying as to be fanciful. Dying persons are often very weak, prone to strong emotions, and vulnerable to the suggestions, expectations, and guidance of others.' **Sen. Orrin Hatch, Chairman of U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, et al.:** 'Giving choices to the vulnerable is not always liberating. A young woman is not more "free" if the law allows her to contract with a pimp; a young man is not more "free" if a pusher can sell him crack cocaine; a child is not more "free" if he or she can "consent" to sexual advances by adults; people are not more "free" if they can voluntarily sell themselves into slavery. Nor is an ill person necessarily more "free" if he can agree to kill himself. Indeed, the mere availability of assisted suicide as a socially legitimated alternative may impel some who would prefer to live to accept this course out of feelings of guilt or shame about the burdens (financial and otherwise) that the choice of continued living would impose on their families.' **American Medical Association et al.:** 'Patients come

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to physicians and nurses at times of greatest need and vulnerability, depending upon these professionals to respond to their needs capably and faithfully. The rule against physician-assisted suicide is an extraordinarily valuable protection against temptation to seek an immediate solution to a burdensome problem that health care professionals, no less than any other human being, can feel. Many patients may understandably wonder, finding themselves badly injured and in the care of a physician they do not know but who is licensed to assist in taking the lives of patients, whether that physician will truly act only to preserve their lives.' **U.S. Catholic Conference et al.:** 'Any notion that the state has less interest in protecting a person's life against a lethal intervention when that person is very sick would itself do violence to the principle of equal justice under the law. . . . This is simply another way of saying that (a) the state may decide in the first place whose life warrants greater or lesser protection (a dangerous proposition by any standard), and (b) as a matter of constitutional law, sick people, in particular, have lives less worth protecting than others. Such a governmental determination would be a direct assault on the fundamental equality and dignity of each and every person.' **Agudath Israel of America:** 'We do not mean to suggest that constitutionalizing a right to assisted suicide is likely to lead to the type of moral collapse that occurred in the German medical profession earlier this century. . . . However, we may not ignore the lessons of that dark era: "What makes the administrative mass killings so outstanding is not their numbers, their efficiency, or their cruelty, but the fact that they occurred in an epoch when nobody thought it was humanly or socially possible. Therein lies their deepest lesson. If it was possible then, why not again? What has fundamentally changed? The curtain may have gone down—but only for the intermission." F. Wertham, *The German Euthanasia Program* 31 (1980). In the decisions below, we detect—ever so faintly, ever so benignly, but ever so ominously—the rustling of the curtain once again.'"

FT

A Republic, If You Can Keep It

The redoubtable Harvey Mansfield of Harvard comments on the new book by the incorrigible Ronald Dworkin of Oxford and New York University, *Freedom's Law: The Moral Reading of the American Constitution* (Oxford University Press). Now you would expect a journal such as this to be wholeheartedly in favor of a moral reading of the Constitution, wouldn't you? After all, injecting clear moral argument into public discourse is part of the raison d'être of our mission. Yes, but . . . The Constitution is the specified framework within which that discourse is conducted. The Constitution institutionalizes the rules by which democratic deliberation and decision-making can take place. That such decisions are democratic means that they are decisions of the majority, with constitutionally specified and democratically supported protections for minorities. In elections, legislation, referenda, and other decision-making, the people are free to make whatever moral (or immoral) arguments they wish, always within the framework of the Constitution.

Professor Dworkin, along with the putatively progressive judiciary of our time, has moved well beyond such old-fashioned ways of understanding the American order. Their "moral reading" of the Constitution is a wondrously pliable hermeneutic in which judges, lawyers, and legal scholars make the Constitution say whatever they think it should say. In this way, the moral judgments of the mandarins of the knowledge class are not only "privileged"—to use the favored term of critical scholars—but in fact are declared to be what the Constitution actually says (with a wink and nudge to the knowing who understand that texts cannot really "say" anything). As Dworkin has so memorably put it, judges are like novelists collectively writing an open-ended story and making it up as they go along. The great task in preserving "Freedom's Law" is to make sure that the people—as in dreaded "majoritarianism"—do not interfere with the important work of the small minority of privileged storytellers.

Mansfield recalls the familiar story in which a lady asked Benjamin Franklin whether the American constitutional convention had produced a republic or a monarchy. Franklin replied: "A republic—if you can keep it." Ronald Dworkin, says Mansfield, would have replied: "A moral system, madam, if you can argue." Mansfield notes, "He would have added quickly that any implication of sexism in his response would be corrected by a future generation arguing more morally than his." Mansfield sums up his critique of Dworkin this way: "The American Founders, whom Dworkin ignores, had a concern for the risk of majoritarianism similar to his. But their remedy was different. They did not reject majoritarianism, because they knew that popular government is necessarily majority rule. They did make it difficult to collect a majority by compelling it to show both determination towards its goal and flexibility in the means. This they did through federalism and separation of powers, two obvious features of the American form of government not

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discussed by Dworkin. The Founders thus imposed a formal necessity of compromise on the people, not regrettable, as Dworkin says, but moral because done with respect for the right of consent. The rights of a minority are better protected by the right of consent fixed in separated powers, they thought, than by 'parchment barriers'—let alone extreme principles constructed of professors' arguments."

That summary warrants a careful second reading. A surprising number of Americans, including readers of this journal, are uneasy about the notion of democracy. Don't we know that the American order is republican and not democratic? they ask. The question reflects the simplistic distinction indicated in the names of our two major parties, partisan distinctions necessarily being simplistic. The American constitutional order, however, is democracy exercised through republican means. That is to say, political sovereignty is vested in the People, and the People are free to indicate any higher sovereignty to which they hold themselves and the political order itself accountable (as in "one nation under God").

So also with the protection of minorities. It is only the majority itself that can protect against the dangers of majoritarianism. Can a majority exercise such self-limitation? Most of the political history of the United States provides a resounding answer in the affirmative. Certainly the majority has demonstrated itself much more capable of self-limitation than have the judicial and academic elites that have usurped political power in the name of protecting against majoritarianism. The Founders understood, and the American people understand, the need for compromise. The same cannot be said of the Dworkins who would impose their smug certitudes in the name of "the moral reading of the Constitution."

Critical scholarship of our time is much enamored of the ironic, and quite blind to the ironies in its own presumption of a right to govern. In claiming to protect minorities against the dangers of raw majoritarianism, the aristocracy of the articulate appeals to what the Founders called the "parchment barriers" of the Constitution, thus turning the Constitution against the People who alone give it legitimate authority. Turning democratic theory on its head, they assume that legitimate authority is derived from the minority rather than the majority. Further, they assume they have a monopoly on defining which minority has political and legal standing. In the case of abortion, they declare that the minority to be protected is not the children who are aborted but the women who want abortions. In the case of affirmative action, whites, males, and heterosexuals who are discriminated against cannot be a minority unfairly treated, for, after all, whites, males, and heterosexuals, when counted together, are part of the majority, and the Constitution is designed to protect only minorities. We must not, however, lose sight of the fact that the chief minority protected by "the moral reading of the Constitution" championed by Dworkin & Co. is the minority of Dworkin & Co. who are so touchingly solicitous in protecting the majority from the perils of self-government.

By such definitional tricks, the champions of "extreme principles constructed of professors' arguments" present themselves as the defenders of threatened minorities, disguising in moral pretension their raw ambition to rule. They have kept the game going for some time and played it with remarkable success over the last thirty years and more. But now the people, so amazingly patient and forbearing, have caught on and the jig is up. The great irony and the great mistake of the self-appointed aristocracy was to pit the "parchment barriers" of the Constitution against the People while, simultaneously, deconstructing those same parchment barriers by the hermeneutics of the aristocracy's will to rule. Dworkin and his ilk on the bench and in the law schools are in the process of discovering that they have taken on the impossible task of convincing the American people that they are bound by a Constitution that means whatever their certified betters say it means, and the one thing their betters say it means for sure is that the majority must not rule.

Faced with this implausible argument for despotism, some Americans came to believe it and have, as a result, rejected the Constitution. Many more, we hope, their patience run thin at last, will let Professor Dworkin and his judicial courtiers have their say before politely, or perhaps not so politely, inviting them to desist from trying to undemocratically impose on the majority what they so naively call "the moral reading of the Constitution," thus permitting a self-governing people to resume the difficult work of keeping the republic bequeathed them by the Founders.

FT

Here Comes the Future, Maybe

Faced with another of the humongous volumes coming out of The Fundamentalism Project that is generously funded by the MacArthur Foundation and edited by Martin E. Marty, Peter Berger got to wondering about this intense interest in fundamentalism. Of course, Marty and the MacArthur people might reply that fundamentalism

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is obviously an important and strange phenomenon, and academics are obliged to try to understand the alien worlds from which it arises.

Berger writes: "But here came another question: *Who* finds this world strange, and to *whom* must it be made understandable? The answer to that question was easy: people to whom the officials of the MacArthur Foundation normally talk, such as professors at American elite universities. And with this came the *Aha!* experience: The concern that must have led to this Project was based on an upside-down perception of the world. The notion here was that so-called fundamentalism (which, when all is said and done, usually refers to any sort of passionate religious movement) is a rare, hard-to-explain thing. But in fact it is not rare at all, neither if one looks at history, nor if one looks around the contemporary world. On the contrary, what is rare is people who think otherwise. Put simply: The difficult-to-understand phenomenon is *not* Iranian mullahs but American university professors. (Would it, perhaps, be worth a multimillion-dollar project to try to explain the latter group?)"

Berger confesses that ages and ages ago he played a part—a very considerable part, we would add—in the development of the "secularization theory" that has now been shattered by reality. Although there are complexities and apparent exceptions, it would seem that the great development of our time is not the secularization but the desecularization of the world. His earlier confidence in secularization theory has made Berger chary of grand generalizations and more open to surprises. He writes: "Finally, in religion as in every other area of human endeavor, individual personalities play a much larger role than most social scientists and historians are willing to concede. Thus there might have been an Islamic revolution in Iran without the Ayatollah Khomeini, but it would probably have looked quite different. No one can predict the appearance of charismatic figures who will launch powerful religious movements in places where no one expects them. Who knows—perhaps the next religious upsurge in America will occur among disenchanted postmodernist academics!"

The Berger essay appears in the *National Interest*, an excellent journal that I took to task some time back for editorially declaring that at the end of the twentieth century religion is largely irrelevant to an understanding of international affairs. Without presuming to take credit, one notes with satisfaction that the editors have since been making up for it. The same issue includes two long discussions of Samuel Huntington's important new book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (Simon & Schuster). Huntington is one of the seminal thinkers of our time, and his book will be receiving major attention in these pages. I note here only that Berger's essay, "The Decline of Secularism," is closely related to Huntington's chief argument that world affairs—chiefly determined by the nation-state in the nineteenth century and by ideology in the twentieth—will in the next century be dominated by the conflict of civilizations, with civilizations typically being defined by religion.

This is Big Think of a very large order that might easily be dismissed coming from a thinker less manifestly capable than Samuel Huntington. As its first commentator, the *National Interest* has Pierre Hassner, a French analyst, who dislikes the book intensely and, one suspects, intently. He is understandably troubled by Huntington's suggestion that the West will have to give up its pretensions to being the universal, and universalizing, civilization. (As Huntington affirms international multiculturalism, he also calls us to resist the domestic multiculturalism that undermines the West in the new world of civilizations in conflict.) Really big theories are terribly vulnerable to nit-picking on the details, and Hassner makes the most of the opportunity. The French, having long since lost their once eminent role in world affairs, do not take kindly to being told that even the West, in which they still have a not unimportant place, may be marginalized.

More interesting is the discussion by Wang Gungwu of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore. In the coming world of clashing Confucian, Islamic, Buddhist, and Christian Civilizational Powers that Huntington foresees, Gungwu detects similarities with the impact of Machiavelli. He writes: "At the end of my second reading of this engrossing book, I was reminded of Machiavelli. What Machiavelli did for the world of princely states, Huntington may well be doing for the multi-civilizational world order. The old political rules remain for the most part, but the protagonists of larger polities, or groups of polities, have been provided with a new logic and language of behavior. I reflected, too, on what Machiavelli's contemporaries thought of *The Prince* when it was first published. The Church authorities who represented the universalism of the day were appalled, but was it because he had elevated the princely states above God's plan, or for some other reason? Did his secular contemporaries think otherwise, that his image of the prince and his princely state represented the real world? Were they puzzled and a little frightened by the new paradigm that accepted the princes for what they were?

"By analogy, the Western powers today might respond to Huntington like the Universal Church and reaffirm that universalism is an absolute good. But less powerful civilizations may be encouraged by Huntington to believe that they might become new princes, with greatly enlarged and elevated parts to play. In the end, this is what is so stunning about *The Clash of Civilizations*: It is not just about the

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future, but may actually help to shape it."

Needless to say, these are questions of the greatest moment for the world of the future, which, all unsuspecting, may already be the world of the present. Again, you will be hearing more about the Huntington thesis in these pages. For the moment, I note the connection with the desecularization of world history, and with the emergence of the Catholic Church, especially in this pontificate, as the chief voice of a universalist reading of the future of the human project. Not so incidentally, the Ramsey Colloquium sponsored by our institute is embarked upon a major study of human rights aimed at the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1998.

Is the idea of a common human project, and of universal human rights in particular, an outdated vestige of a temporary Western hegemony? Is it possible that secular intellectuals in the West will in the future ally themselves, however uneasily, with the Catholic Church as the world's chief institutional champion of the idea of the universal? Might the church of Enlightenment universalism, which has reigned so confidently over these last two centuries, enter into restored communion with the Church from which it broke? Can the Christian proposal comprehend, without threatening, the universalist aspirations within other religio-cultural forms of what Huntington calls Civilizational Powers? Big questions all. But then, what's the point of reading a journal called First Things if one doesn't want to take on the big ones?

FT

While We're At It

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■ The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press reports that 45 percent of adult Americans have a favorable view of the Christian Coalition and 35 percent an unfavorable. The favorable rating is remarkable when one considers that in the general media the Christian Coalition is synonymous with a *"religious right" that is routinely depicted in terms* ranging from controversial to dangerously fanatical. Sixty-four percent of white evangelical Protestants rate the Coalition favorably. The same survey found that 47 percent of black Christians say their pastor publicly endorses political candidates, as do 20 percent of white evangelical Protestants. As for white Catholics and mainline Protestants, only 12 percent report such political activity by their clergy. A regular complaint by conservative Catholics is that black clergy are given a free ride for their open politicking, whereas any hint of partisanship by Catholic clergy immediately triggers an outcry against the alleged violation of church and state. There is something to the complaint, but it is not so hard to explain. Given America's racial history and the mix of white guilt and condescension, blacks are granted many exemptions from what is expected of others. Whether or not that is just, it is a fact of life. Second, Catholic social teaching is not an ideology, and certainly not a party platform. With few exceptions, the translation from moral truth to electoral imperative is not and should not be easy. Third, a political endorsement from the pulpit would, in most Catholic parishes, be criticized as divisive and create major pastoral headaches, whereas black congregations tend to be politically homogeneous and any conservative dissenters stay in their place, which is to sit quietly at the back of the bus. A further difference is that liberal Catholics are generally not interested in their clergy being more politically specific. They know that, if they were, they might more often than not be specific about a candidate's position on questions such as abortion and euthanasia where the Church's teaching is unmistakable. As a result, any political endorsements might generally tilt to the conservative side. Better, from the liberal viewpoint, that political specificity be muffled under the seamless blanket of the parish family's huddled togetherness. In all the churches, however, best of all is when the clergy lucidly set forth what is clear Christian teaching, refrain from presenting their opinions or the opinions of their congregants as the Word of God, and challenge people to cast an informed and conscientious ballot.

■ "Science Debunks Shroud." Those were the headlines in 1988 when Carbon-14 testing of the Shroud of Turin, alleged to be the burial cloth of Jesus of Nazareth, "established" that it was a pious forgery from the twelfth or thirteenth century. But science marches on, and now John Ray, an Egyptologist at Cambridge University, writes in the *Times Literary Supplement* that the dispute over the shroud is wide open again. A big problem is that nobody has come up with a plausible scientific explanation of how the forgery, if it is a forgery, was actually done. It has been pretty firmly established that the shroud is not a painting in any known sense of that term, and fresh questions have been raised about the reliability of the Carbon-14 dating. Ray

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writes: "If the Shroud is not a painting and its date is uncertain, what is it, and who is the figure represented? The shortest answer, which is also the most difficult to assess, is the traditional one: the man is Jesus of Nazareth, who has photographed himself in some unknown way on to the cloth. If the process that produced the Shroud is miraculous, it is most unlikely that it can be explained, although the physical effects upon the linen can presumably still be analyzed. There seems to be no way that science can prove this theory, which is why it is better to leave it out of the debate. It may be true, in which case all other attempts to explain the Shroud will come to nothing, and we will be left with a sense of incomprehension. But, at a scientific level, this would be all that could be said about it." Several "radiation" theories have been proposed, suggesting that a life-size statue somehow left the impression on the shroud. "The best which can be said about this," writes Ray, "would be to reserve judgment until it is demonstrated that anatomically accurate life-sized naked statues capable of singeing clothes were being produced in the Middle Ages." "At the moment the question of the Shroud is open, and it is likely to remain so in the absence of new testing or techniques. Those who believe that the Shroud is a miraculous portrait of Jesus of Nazareth, or those who would like in their hearts to think so, can comfort themselves by the fact that the object in Turin is behaving in exactly the way it would do if it were inexplicable." Yet Ray allows that it is possible that some unknown artist in some unknown way at some unknown date created an artifact "that is both baffling and awe-inspiring." "He may have done it out of piety, or for quick profit, or even out of mischief. But he created a masterpiece; and, if the resemblances to the Christ of the Gospels are deliberate, he created a religious masterpiece. If artists can be divinely guided, who is to say that he was not?"

■ Well, he's writing for the *Christian Century*, and how else do you get into a liberal magazine a long and fervent appreciation of a conservative such as Russell Kirk except by repeatedly saying that he's not like those other "bad" conservatives? In a review essay on Kirk's autobiographical *The Sword of Imagination*, Ralph Wood of Wake Forest University complains that Malcolm Muggeridge, Paul Johnson, and Walker Percy, among others, reflect "the sourness that afflicts so many critics of modernity." Not so with Kirk, who displayed "a gladness of heart that was rooted in an ardent love for European culture in both its particularity and impermanence." Wood is as right about Kirk as he is wrong about the others. He writes that Kirk identified with the historical circumstance of St. Augustine, who reflected on "the community of souls that endures when the cities of this world have been given up to fire and sword." Wood ends with this: "Such faith enabled Kirk to transcend the limits of his cultural conservatism, and thus to wield his sword of the imagination with a cheerful countenance." That, one may be permitted to suggest, is to get things exactly backward. Kirk's faith made possible and necessary his cultural conservatism by pointing him toward that which transcends all cultural moments. But then, a little conservative-bashing and a liberally correct spin in the concluding paragraph is perhaps a small price to pay for getting such a generous appreciation of Russell Kirk published in the *Christian Century*.

■ Is there too much or too little economic inequality in the U.S.? And by what criteria could one come up with an answer to that? The idea that there could be too little inequality strikes many people as absurd. But it depends on how one measures economic status—by income, consumption, or wealth—and on the voluntary choices people make about how much to work and how much time to devote to other activities. In addition, there are changing sources of wealth, such as "physical" capital and "human" capital. Of course there are some people, too many people, who are poor because they are outside the circle of economic activity and productivity altogether. But also for those inside the circle the question of economic inequality is a fascinating one, and it is fascinatingly explored in two recent booklets from the American Enterprise Institute: *The Distribution of Wealth* by John Weicher and *Wage Inequality* by Francine Blau and Lawrence Kahn (write 1150 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington D.C. 20036).

■ Head, heart, hands, and health. Put them together and you've got 4-H. Recently the leaders in Iowa lost their head and succumbed to advanced thinkers who believe competition is a bad thing. Instead of awarding the traditional blue, red, and white ribbons for first, second, and third place at the Iowa State Fair, all 3,500 entrants in various competitions received the same multicolored ribbon. A great uproar ensued and 4-H leaders promised to go back to the old way. Our leading parish paper was amused by the behavior of the rubes, mockingly observing that some folk in Iowa called the new scheme "socialistic." The *Times* did not note that the new rules prevented what it calls the "3,500 competitors" from competing. It did report, showing just how benighted those Iowans are, the complaint that a recent 4-H conference for hundreds of high school students had a session on tolerance for homosexuals. A Mrs. Mohning is reported as saying, "Usually [the conference] deals with hog diseases and horticulture, but this time it dealt with homosexuality." One is reminded of the Iowa Congressman who, opposing the Defense of Marriage Act in the last session, declared that same-sex marriage "is not a big deal in Iowa." Just wait. If

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the progressive 4-H leaders get their way, Iowans will quickly learn that there are worse things than hog diseases. In fact, I expect they already know that, which is why they are demanding that the head be rejoined to the other h's in 4-H.

■ The disappointment is more than usual when the content of a book flatly contradicts the promise of its title. That is the case with Mark Graber's *Rethinking Abortion: Equal Choice, the Constitution, and Reproductive Politics* (Princeton University Press). According to Professor Steven D. Smith at the University of Colorado Law School, Graber's chief point is that anyone who wants to rethink the current abortion license is either ignorant or a hypocrite. Graber insists on pro-choice orthodoxy down the line. Smith writes: "At some point the sociological and jurisprudential questions converge. Law by its nature claims authority, and authority has both a sociological and jurisprudential dimension. A government without justice, as Augustine observed long ago, is not much more than a group of bandits operating on a large scale. So citizens might decline to ascribe authority to a government that officially endorses practices they regard as deeply immoral, even if they also realize that in a pervasively imperfect world such practices are likely to—and perhaps even, in some tragic sense, *need to*—flourish anyway. And indeed, people are sometimes heard to say that a law, or a government, that officially refuses to honor the sacred value of life is unworthy of respect. In a complicated and obscure way, something like this concept seems to have been in the background of largely unenforced prohibitions on abortion. Similar sensibilities may be at work in the repugnance felt by many towards *Roe* even if the prospects for actually eradicating abortion seem next to nil." He adds that a book that really helps people "rethink abortion" would be a very good idea.

■ Most everybody is impressed by Peter J. Gomes, minister of Harvard's Memorial Church. Even those put off by the somewhat affected Anglophiliac ways (he sometimes calls himself an Afro-Saxon-American) admit that he's quite a piece of work. He is also a black Republican, a declared conservative theologically, and a fierce opponent of the multicultural enemies of Western culture. Not surprisingly, Gomes was for a long time a favorite of conservative Christians at Harvard. Until November 1991, that is, when he declared himself to be gay. Gomes' effort to combat biblical illiteracy, *The Good Book* (Morrow), recently appeared and the *New Yorker* has this admiring, indeed adulatory, profile of the author. Robert Boynton says the book "is offering a bold theological argument." Gomes contends, for instance, "The place for creative hope that arises out of suffering is most likely now to be found among blacks, women, and homosexuals." Presumably it takes courage to say that at Harvard. Gomes embraces the standard gay line on homosexuality and the Bible: Paul and others only knew the debauched, idolatrous, pagan expressions of homosexuality. "All they knew of homosexuality," writes Gomes, "was prostitution, pederasty, lasciviousness, and exploitation." While calling himself gay, Gomes declares he is and always has been sexually chaste, holding himself aloof from all that "gay" connotes in today's world. Boynton writes: "Though Gomes has occasionally visited a gay bar, he hasn't really explored the culture of homosexuality. Indeed, he is skeptical about whether such a thing exists." It is no doubt a great deal easier to chatter about loving, committed human relationships if one does not know about a subculture ravaged by loneliness, alcoholism, suicide, drugs, and deadly disease, and whose denizens have an average life expectancy of forty-two years. Gomes is much taken with Augustine's City of God. "Harvard is my City of God. We are different from the rest of the world, and we ought to be." If I read St. Augustine aright, that is what he calls idolatry. One gets the impression that, for all his display of sangfroid, Peter J. Gomes is a deeply conflicted man. On the realities of homosexuality, where he has alienated former admirers and gained fawning celebrity from new admirers, the conflict seems to be contained by studiously cultivated ignorance. A gay subculture? Really, my dear, it is all so sordid. Who wants to know about it?

■ Last November, in the coronation hall of Prague Castle, President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic bestowed posthumously the Order of T. G. Masaryk on the Rev. Blahoslav Hruby (1911-1990). The award is richly deserved. During the long years of the Cold War, Blaho and his wife Olga labored unstintingly to inform the West about the persecution of believers behind the Iron Curtain. Working out of a small office at the National Council of Churches, they were shunned and scorned by anti-anti-Communist mainline church leadership for being "cold warriors," which was the most unfashionable of things to be. Olga continues to run the Research Center for Religion and Human Rights in Closed Societies (475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10027). It is gratifying that President Havel had the decency to honor the heroism of a labor by which we have all been blessed.

■ "I had a dream: to be able to accompany the poor, the excluded, the ignored, without having to explain myself or justify myself to the rich, the secure, or the comfortable. . . . I dreamed of the freedom to think and express myself, to debate and criticize, without fear of the guillotine." So Bishop Jacques Gaillot goes on in his little book *Voice from the Desert: A Bishop's Cry for a New Church* (Crossroad). For thirteen years, until 1995, he was bishop of Evreux in

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France and much celebrated by "the rich, the secure, and the comfortable" of the secular media for his public defiance of Catholic teaching until Rome, in the absence of a "guillotine," simply transferred him to a nonfunctioning diocese in North Africa. Readers who feel nauseated by the self-righteous grandstanding of putatively prophetic proponents of "a new church" might find this book the perfect emetic.

■ One reason some observers think that the Supreme Court will not uphold the Ninth and Second Circuits on physician-assisted suicide (PAS) is that the Court, a thoroughly political institution, knows that euthanasia has very spotty support even on the left. Witness the review of Herbert Hendin's *Seduced by Death: Doctors, Patients, and the Dutch Cure*, by David Rothman of Columbia, writing in the premier journal of the left, the *Nation*: "Is there any reconciling the demand for control with the fear of coercion? Not really. PAS is not the first time a measure that seems to fit the needs of some proves incompatible with the interests of others. The debate over sterilization policies in the seventies is an apt case. Since many low-income black women were undergoing coerced sterilization immediately after delivery (with some hospitals making sterilization a precondition for delivery in their facility), civil libertarians proposed a compulsory waiting period for the procedure. Some middle-class women objected to having their rights infringed. They did not want to wait a month and return for a separate operation. Nevertheless, their autonomy had to be circumscribed because the potential coercive effects upon others was too great. The situation in PAS is similar. Even if one has no fear of physician or family coercion, the prospect of it occurring for others should be determinative. A so-called right may have to be abridged in order to protect others less well-situated." It's not the best or most important argument against euthanasia, but when it comes to moral wisdom we should take what we can get, especially from the *Nation*.

■ Here is an odd thing about professional scribblers. They fanatically resist an idea for years. Then, when the idea is vindicated beyond believable challenge, they pretend that they knew it all along. For instance, they insisted that communism is a permanent fixture on the world scene and our task is to reconcile ourselves to that fact of life by peaceful coexistence. Later: Why, of course, we knew all along that communism would collapse. For another instance, they insisted that mainline Protestantism is the religio-moral baseline of American life, and only a few carping conservatives don't like it because they disagree with its liberal politics. Later: Why, of course, it has been evident for years that the mainline churches were in theological, moral, and institutional free fall. Why do I mention this odd thing? Because of the almost total non-attention paid Thomas Reeves' fine book, *The Empty Church* (Free Press). We published an excerpt ("Not So Christian America," October 1996), but the book doesn't exist so far as other publications are concerned. Well, to be fair, the *Philadelphia Enquirer* did have a lady minister of the United Church of Christ review it. She thought it was really bad, going so far as to declare that it is (gasp) conservative. The sadness is that people who preen themselves on being tolerant and open-minded are so unwilling to do what intellectuals are supposed to do, namely, engage arguments. What? you say. At his age, Neuhaus is still surprised by that? No, not surprised, but saddened, and convinced that it needs to be pointed out again and again. In any event, *The Empty Church* is a book that should be engaged. It is more than a catalogue of the familiar woes of the mainline/oldline/sideline. It is an effort to figure out what happened and what might be done about it, and that is an effort very much worth making. About a third of the Christians in this country belong to those churches. They and their denominations must not be written off.

■ Slavery in Africa, tragically, is not a thing of the past. The Muslim government of Sudan, for instance, is reliably reported to have enslaved thousands of Christian children who are subjected to sexual abuse, torture, and forced conversion to Islam (see Joseph Gregory's report, "African Slavery 1996," FIRST THINGS, May 1996). Now, Christian Solidarity International (CSI) has gone into Sudan to buy back slaves at a price per slave equivalent to $2,000 or the cost of three cows. A representative of Anti-Slavery International protests that, however noble its intentions, CSI is in fact contributing to the trade in slaves. The only long-term solution, he says, is to pressure the Sudanese government to stop the practice. CSI responds that its policy both publicizes the situation in Sudan and helps individual slaves. One can understand both arguments, but I have to come down on the side of CSI on this one. In the uncertain choice between long-term and short-term, between political strategy and rescuing a few, the better policy is to do what you can to help whom you can when you can. Moreover, an international appeal for funds to buy people out of slavery is an excellent way to focus attention and increase pressure on the government of Sudan.

■ We pointed out that, contra many press reports, the ten points of a "Catholic Framework for Economic Life," recently issued by the bishops conference, is not just a rehash of the 1986 pastoral, "Economic Justice for All." We are glad to have the agreement of the *National Catholic Reporter*, which, precisely for that reason, very much dislikes the ten points. The framework is "just words" because, unlike the 1986 pastoral, it doesn't presume to offer

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sweeping prescriptions for overhauling the economic system. In the words of the *NCR*, it doesn't "spell out how the country and the world moves (sic) into a post-capitalistic, economically just, new world." Exactly right, thank God.

■ Theological insight is cropping up all over. This from the *Today* show on NBC: "Bryant Gumbel: 'You write that you prayed more during your four years in office than basically at any time in your life and yet I think it's fair to say, and I hope this doesn't sound harsh, I think it's fair to say, you are consistently viewed as one of the more ineffective Presidents of modern times.' Jimmy Carter: 'Well, I think that's harsh and unfair, but you have a right to your opinion.' Gumbel: 'It's not mine. It's what I perceive as a general view. What do you think, if anything, that says about the power of prayer?'"

■ You may have seen Sister Wendy Beckett on public television. She is the nun whom the BBC has explaining the great, and not so great, art of Western civilization, and she does it very winsomely indeed. She is in the long tradition of nuns examined by Jo Ann Kay McNamara in a remarkable new book, *Sisters in Arms: Catholic Nuns Through Two Millennia* (Harvard University Press). Reviewing the book, Fiona MacCarthy writes: "Sister Wendy is a powerful example of the practical uses nuns have made of their apartness. Through history the cloistered life, the retreat from the world, has actually opened out the opportunities available to individual women, to scholars and mystics, teachers and healers, political activists, artists and writers, whose creative energies have been focused by the spiritual stillness and repetitive rhythms of communal religious life. The possibilities for expression endemic in lives of dedicated chastity is one of the most interesting themes of Professor McNamara's ambitious and energetic book." Of these nuns, McNamara says: "They served their god and their church and in doing so they fulfilled themselves and laid a foundation for all women. Without the daring and sacrifice of these nuns, it is impossible to imagine the feminist movements of modern times finding any purchase in the public world." *Sisters in Arms* is a marvelous story of the leadership of women in education, health care, social work, the arts, and the spiritual life over many centuries, and continuing to this day. It is not just arguably the case, it is manifestly the case, that women in the Catholic Church exercised much more effective leadership, in the Church and in the world, before the last several decades' excitements about liberation and empowerment. Liberated from the traditional disciplines so well described by Ms. McNamara, blue-jeaned Sister Trixy mouthing the tripe of feminist protest seems more pathetic than empowered.

■ On December 3, 1996, the feast of St. Francis Xavier, John Paul II called on the Chinese regime to stop persecuting underground Catholics and to allow the hierarchy and members of the "patriotic church" to regularize their relationship with Rome. There are reportedly about four million in the patriotic church, which is controlled by the government, and more than twice that number in the underground church. "Even today," the Pope said in a broadcast beamed to China, "all Chinese Catholics are called to remain constant to the faith received and communicated, not giving in to concepts of a church which respond neither to the will of the Lord Jesus, nor to the Catholic faith, nor to the sentiment and conviction of the great majority of Chinese Catholics." The next day the Chinese government responded that "the Vatican should stop using religion to interfere in our internal affairs." But what else does the Vatican have?

■ Returning yet again to his obsession, Andrew Sullivan of *The New Republic* celebrates the Hawaii court ruling in favor of same-sex marriage as "a perfect example of federalism." "We are, in other words, at the beginning of a protracted and elaborate struggle," he writes. "Good. This is surely how the system is supposed to work—in cases, legislation, speeches, debates, and votes." Uh huh. The American Founders, one expects, would have been surprised by the suggestion that the way of democratic deliberation and decision-making is to get a court in the middle of the Pacific Ocean to make an unpopular ruling that can then be imposed upon the country by higher courts, thus provoking legislation, speeches, debates, and votes in resistance to the imposition. It is noteworthy that Mr. Sullivan's notion of "how the system is supposed to work" begins with cases and courts. He studied political science in another country, and it shows, although the form of government he favors is even less compatible with that of Britain. On the other hand, the system he describes is, in fact, the way this country is increasingly ruled. There is a nice irony in having a Brit compliment the colonies on having devised a system that rises above that earlier nonsense about self-government.

■ It says here the bishops of England and Wales are planning to cut back on holy days of obligation, leaving only Christmas and one feast of Our Lady (January 1 or August 15). SS. Peter and Paul, All Saints, Epiphany, Ascension, and Corpus Christi will be folded into the nearest Sunday, which means that they will, in terms of the practiced piety of the faithful, disappear. The proposal is as unsurprising as it is wrongheaded. Even the bishops' liturgy office seems embarrassed, but it is as though they just can't help themselves from continuing on a misguided course of modernization embraced decades ago. A spokesman says the intention is not to make life

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easier for Catholics but to avoid "confusion." The "confusion" is now caused by the fact that some days of obligation are already transferred to Sunday while others are not. So who caused the confusion to begin with if not the same liturgists who, whatever their intentions, have systematically been eliminating the distinctives of being Catholic? Unless one wants to count as a Catholic distinctive the burden of confusion about what is required to be a good Catholic. The same spokesman mumbles something about many Catholics going to Mass on Good Friday and Ash Wednesday, even though they are not days of obligation. Pastoral sense, which is mainly common sense, plus every bit of sociological insight tell us that, if consistency is required, maybe the answer is to make Good Friday and Ash Wednesday days of obligation. The *Tablet* cites another churchman who points out "that it [is] now almost impossible to celebrate feasts properly in short lunch-time Masses designed for working people." Oh dear, we are so very, very busy. "It could be argued that transferring those feasts to Sunday would afford them the solemnity they deserved." Yes, it could be but it wouldn't be by anyone who knows what happens to feasts that are not celebrated on their proper day. What a startling and reinvigorating thing it would be were a bishops conference to move in the other direction after these decades of dispiriting "reforms," and actually increase rather than decrease the demands of ecclesial fidelity. It was, for instance, a matter of slight theological but enormous sociological consequence when it was decided that the Friday abstinence from meat should be optional. As an item of Catholic piety and identity, the practice has virtually disappeared, with no conceivable gain and a very palpable loss in the sense of being Catholic. But the bishops and their liturgical apparatchiks stumble along in the weary path of *aggiornamento*, "updating" the Church to conform with an exhausted culture that yearns for an alternative to itself. It is a great consolation to know that belief in the infallibility of the Church does not require denying the capacity of its leaders for doing things that are really dumb.

■ Richard Sanders, a justice on the Supreme Court of Washington state, spoke briefly at a pro-life rally in January. Here, in its entirety, is what he said: "I want to give all of you my best wishes in this celebration of human life. Nothing is, or should be, more fundamental in our legal system than the preservation and protection of innocent human life. By coincidence, or perhaps by providence, my formal induction to the Washington State Supreme Court occurred about an hour ago. I owe my election to many of the people who are here today and I'm here to say thank you very much and good luck. Our mutual pursuit of justice requires a lifetime of dedication and courage. Keep up the good work." The state Commission on Judicial Conduct promptly filed charges against him. The indictment includes the assertion that "Respondent [Sanders] appeared at the event carrying a red rose, a symbol identified with the 'March for Life.'" Michelle Malkin, a *Seattle Times* columnist, wrote, "Carrying a red rose? How scandalous! Thank heavens the state commission has stepped forward to protect the public and the judiciary from such corrupt behavior." The ACLU, to its credit, has come to Sanders' defense. Not so the Washington chapter of the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), whose spokesman said that judges "do have a right to their personal opinions, but I don't think it's appropriate for sitting judges to come out [on abortion]." The *Times* notes that maybe NARAL should then refrain from issuing its questionnaire to candidates for the Supreme Court. The questionnaire asks, "What life experiences have you had that you believe would enable you to judge reproductive rights cases with empathy and compassion?" Justice James Dolliver went public with his answer: "A member of my family has had an abortion which I both encouraged and paid for." There is no record of NARAL having objected to Dolliver's "coming out." The charges against Sanders are the first time in the sixteen-year history of the commission that it has considered disciplining a Supreme Court justice.

■ When in 1984 the U.S. established diplomatic relations with the Holy See, President Reagan appointed his friend William Wilson as ambassador. He was followed by Frank Shakespeare and Thomas Melady, while President Clinton's man is Raymond Flynn, former mayor of Boston. The three former ambassadors have now written a letter urging Clinton to place the ambassadorship within the traditional—and diplomatically more serious—context of foreign service appointments and thus avoid "the appearance that the post is a political toy." Not surprisingly, Ambassador Flynn disagrees with his predecessors, but our sources in the Vatican strongly support the letter, indicating that the Holy See has a hard time setting much store by an office that is viewed as a presidential pay-off. The 1984 Senate resolution said the office would have "no appearance of involvement in partisan political or sectarian religious affairs." Unfortunately, that has become very much its appearance under Ambassador Flynn, who says he is operating by an expanded mandate given him by the President. It is reported that Ambassador Flynn will be leaving his post this summer.

■ Outside premillennial dispensationalist circles of apocalyptic excitements—and if you don't know what those terms mean, be assured you are safely distanced from such circles—the book would have received slight attention. But then somebody noticed

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that it carries a blurb by Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition saying that the book "is a compelling look at the controversial subject of the end times." The book is *Earth's Two-Minute Warning: Today's Bible-Predicted Signs of the End Times* by John Wheeler, who served as the first editor of the Coalition's paper, *Christian America*. In the course of his propounding eschatological scenarios involving the Mark of the Beast and whether "the rapture" is pre-, post-, or mid- the "great tribulation," Wheeler gets off some conventional (for his religious world) speculations about the possibly nefarious role of the Catholic Church in history's wind-up, and some Catholic publications pounced on what they took to be Ralph Reed's endorsement of Catholic-bashing. That's going a bit overboard. We asked Ralph Reed about it and he wrote us this: "I provided the blurb without reading the book due to my busy schedule during the recent elections. That was a mistake, one that I very much regret. Had I read through the entire book I would not have provided a cover comment. Mr. Wheeler is a former employee and I provided my statement as a personal favor. The blurb in its entirety stated that 'many will disagree' with the book's conclusions. Those words were edited by the publisher and did not appear on the book, thus changing the meaning of my statement. This has been a valuable learning experience. Anyone who has attempted to assist a former employee or even a family member can understand my intentions."

■ In reviewing one of his books, a *New York Times* critic called Joseph Epstein one of the leading practitioners of the "familiar essay." Epstein says jokingly that he was taken aback; he thought he was the only one. After twenty-two years of editing the *American Scholar*, the quarterly of the Phi Beta Kappa society, and turning it into one of the most intelligent and engaging publications in the country, Mr. Epstein has been dismissed. The problem, it seems, is that he didn't run enough articles on feminist and ethnic studies. A *Wall Street Journal* editorial says: "The prime complaint against Mr. Epstein, his adversaries explain, is that the *American Scholar* failed under his editorship to reflect the scholarly world as it is today. Circumstances being what they are, a great many readers of the *American Scholar*, of course, are grateful to Mr. Epstein for precisely that reason." Reports are that Phi Beta Kappa has lost its cachet in recent years, with more and more top students declining the invitation to join. It seems unlikely that the action against Joseph Epstein will enhance the standing of the society.

■ Prescind, if you will, from the question of what ought to be U.S. policy toward Cuba. I have to sympathize with a friend, a foreign affairs expert, who is near apoplectic about what the Canadians are doing. Not so much because he thinks Canada's policies are wrong but because they are decked out in such smarmy tones of moral superiority. He is the one who brought to my attention the Anglican pronouncement urging Canadians to winter in Cuba rather than Florida, thereby striking a blow for the oppressed of the world. Now he comes into the office brandishing a news story that features a photo of beaming Canadian officials, including Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, fawning all over the Maximum Leader. "Cuba comes up on our radar scope as a much higher priority than before," effuses Mr. Axworthy. "Canadians are discovering a whole new world south of our southern neighbor." A whole new world in a little island of eleven million people oppressed and impoverished by a brutal dictator for almost forty years. I can understand my friend's distress. Far from championing justice, the Canadians are apologists for injustice and are making a very tidy profit from it. With Cuba closed to American companies, Canadians can be very competitive in building hotels and selling machinery. Last year, trade between Canada and Cuba exceeded $430 million and was growing by more than 10 percent a year, which includes 156,000 Canadian tourists, a 10 percent increase over 1995. Canada, in turn, buys lobsters, sugar, and nickel from Cuba. This relationship, needless to say, is not one of imperialism, as in the bad old days of the U.S. and Fulgencio Batista, but of enlightened cooperation. Batista, after all, was a dictator. What my friend the expert does not properly appreciate is that Canadian politicians and entrepreneurs are much like others; they seen their opportunities and they took 'em. Moreover, there is a poignancy in the case of Canadians, for whom it often seems that the entire world is the U.S. The Canadian identity kit is almost emptied these days. The vaunted health care system is on the brink of bankruptcy, hockey leagues are riddled with sex scandals, bilingualism slides into secession and national dissolution, and it seems nobody loves the now ubiquitously littering Canada goose. Canadian identity needs the discovery of "a whole new world," even if it is a small and morally sleazy one. Consorting with Fidel is a defiant statement to Americans that Canada is not just the little kid that lives on the northside of reality. Then, too, there is that easy money, and not a few U.S. businesses stolen by Fidel and now used to bribe the bribable. All this my friend should more sympathetically appreciate, although he should be careful about saying it out loud. It gets the famously phlegmatic Canadians going something fierce. (And now I await the usual undiplomatic protest from my diplomat cousin in Ottawa.)

■ The headline of a Reuters story, "An Early Mass Celebrated by Mother Teresa." The story continues, "Mother Teresa, who returned home last week to continue recovering from heart surgery, led a

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Christmas Mass yesterday at her Calcutta mission." I hope nobody tells the Pope.

■ Here is a hard case, persuasively depicted by five psychiatrists in the *Wall Street Journal*: "Suppose that a young man, seeking help for a psychological condition that was associated with serious health risks and made him desperately unhappy, were to be told by the professional he consulted that no treatment is available, that his condition is permanent and genetically based, and that he must learn to live with it. Perhaps this young man, unwilling to give up hope, sought out other specialists only to receive the same message: 'Nothing can be done for you. Accept your condition.' How would this man and his family feel when they discovered years later that numerous therapeutic approaches have been available for his specific problem for more than sixty years? What would be his reaction when informed that, although none of these approaches guaranteed results and most required a long period of treatment, a patient who was willing to follow a proven treatment regime had a good chance of being free from the condition? How would this man feel if he discovered that the reason he was not informed that treatment for his condition was available was that certain groups were, for political reasons, pressuring professionals to deny that effective treatment existed?" As they say, there is no guarantee, but psychiatrists who treat homosexuality say that there is a 25 percent to 50 percent chance of "significant improvement," and "many find the freedom they are seeking and are able to have normal relationsips with women." For more information, write: The National Association for Research and Treatment of Homosexuality, 16542 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 416, Encino, CA 91436; phone: (818) 789-4440.

■ The sleeping giant of populist outrage is roused by Ronnie Dugger, a Texas writer, and his angry friends. "The divine right of kings has been replaced by the divine right of CEOs," Dugger thundered, to the applause of 250 leftist activists from thirty-two states gathered at a conference center in Hunt, Texas. Jim Hightower, former Texas Agriculture Commissioner, was brought in to rabble the assemblage against Clinton's sellout of the progressive cause. While the oratory was perhaps not as memorable as William Jennings Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech in 1896, the group had lots of good ideas. Double the minimum wage, said some. Nationalize the oil industry, said others. Abolish Congress, said yet others. Not that radicalism was permitted to get in the way of political propriety. The group fretted that there were almost no African Americans, Hispanics, or other minorities present, and you may be sure that all were careful to use gender-inclusive language. But this I found especially piquant in the report on a meeting aimed

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at arousing the populist passions of down-to-earth Joe-six-pack workers and farmers against their corporate and cultural overlords: "Those at the conference were asked, in deference to the fragrance-sensitive, to refrain from wearing hair spray, perfume, or cologne." Designer populism.

■ No, no, there has been no "falling out" at all. Some of you have worried that Father Avery Dulles' letter about my comments on the Society of Jesus indicates a parting of the ways. On the contrary, we are the closest of friends, typically talk to one another at least once a week, and regularly have dinner together. In addition, he is the keystone of the "Dulles Colloquium," an ongoing conversation we sponsor on theology and public philosophy. His letter indicates nothing more than that he wanted it on the record that he thought some of my criticism of the Jesuits was excessive. Fair enough.

■ It turns out that Leonardo Boff of Brazil, former Franciscan priest and famed liberation theologian, was for years carrying on with his secretary, Marcia Monteiro Miranda. Although not married, they are now living together. Says his mistress, "When priests start living in intimacy with a woman as a couple, they cannot easily overcome their priestly formation and have a hard time until they get used to it." Yet another challenge posed to the reform of seminary education.

■ Such self-discipline. It has been I don't know how many months since I've remarked on Father Richard McBrien of Notre Dame. In part because what he calls his "self-syndicated" column is hard to find these days. But dedicated readers send me one from time to time, and some are hard to resist. In this column, for instance, Fr. McBrien is taken with a writer who argues that "celibacy for Catholic clergy is fundamentally incorrect from a genetic perspective." "Genetically," Yamil Lara writes, "Catholics cannot afford to continue to practice institutionally mandated celibacy." "It is the extinction of our finest and the opposite of what our knowledge of genetics dictates." Fr. McBrien clinches the argument by citing a long list of high-achieving politicians, actors, and Protestant clergy who have given the world high-achieving children. So why aren't priests doing their duty to improve the race? Theologians and other ponderous types might object that viewing the priesthood in terms of genetic perpetuation is the very antithesis of the Catholic idea of the priest as an icon of eschatological disposability. Readers unaccustomed to such elevated reflections, however, might simply give a moment's thought to a world filled with little McBriens. Not that I believe terminal silliness is genetically transmitted.

■ Chief Ita Bassey Etuk of Nung Udoe, Nigeria, has appealed to the Lutheran Church of Nigeria to give up its opposition to polygamy. The church, he said, should review doctrines that have "outlived their usefulness, especially in a traditional African society." He added that his whole village would have turned Lutheran long ago "if the church had discarded some of the dogmas enacted almost 500 years ago and moved along with society." It gives one a whole new take on historical progress.

■ Here's something you likely missed. The Portuguese Evangelical Methodist Church has received its autonomy from the British Methodist Church, 125 years after the first British Methodist missionary was sent to Portugal. Harold Macmillan's decolonizing "winds of change" blow slowly but exceedingly fine.

■ Resolved: I'm going to compose that list of potential subscribers as soon as I've finished reading "The Public Square." Good for you. Please don't forget.

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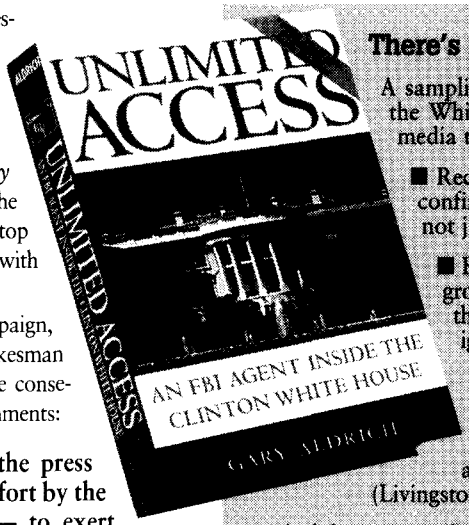

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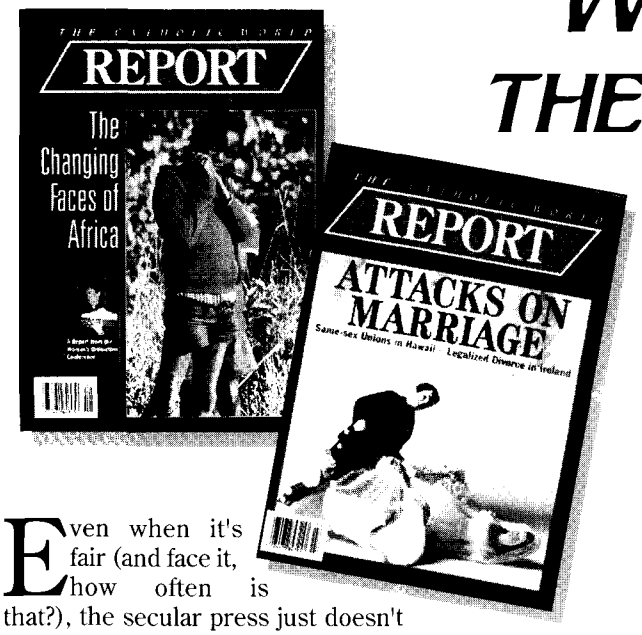

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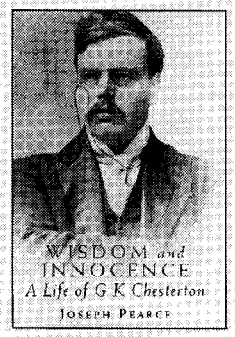

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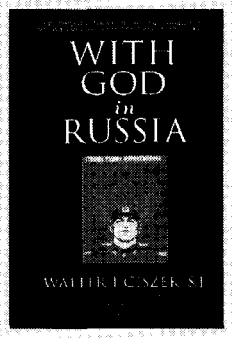

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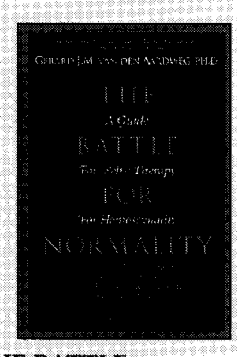

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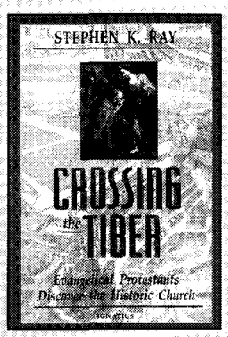

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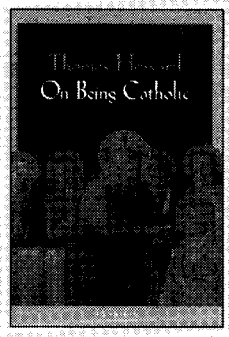

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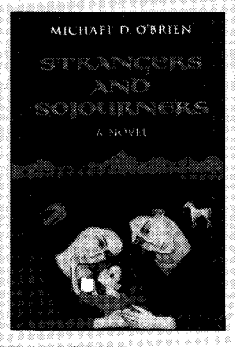

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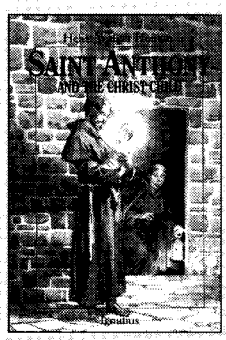

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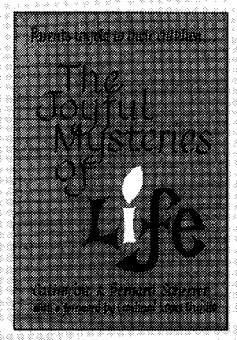

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